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The Week

AT the last moment the Harding administration, in the person of Secretary of Labor Davis, went unexpectedly far in pubicly condemning the coal operators for refusing to negotiate with the Miners' Union. The Secretary's statement will strengthen the miners in waging the strike, and if the union can hold out long enough, it will pave the way for ultimate government intervention which will work in favor of the union. But in insisting on conference Secretary Davis was convicting the operators of a technical rather than a substantial fault. Their real error from the public point of view was not so much the refusal to confer as the adoption of a policy with respect to the union which necessarily made conference abortive. Why confer with a body whose throat you propose to cut? They plan to break the union up by substituting local for general agreements. They expect as the result of local agreements to reduce wages and working conditions throughout all the bituminous coal fields down to the level of the non-union mines. Recently the operators in the central competitive district who because of the location of their properties suffer most particularly from the competition of the non-union mines in West Virginia have chafed under the restrictions of a general agreement. They are demanding special local agreements which will permit them to whittle the wages of their union employees down to the non-union level. They plan to use the non-union mines as an economic lever with which gradually to force all the union miners to accept the lower standard of wages and working conditions which prevail in the West Virginia fields. The value of the non-union mines as a weapon in this industrial war explains the efforts which the union made to organize the non-union fields and the systematic violence by which it was resisted.

IN the light of the foregoing facts the refusal of the operators to confer is merely the fighting edge of the policy of withdrawing the recognition which they have hitherto extended to the union. If the union is not recognized for purposes of conducting negotiations on behalf of its members, it ceases to deserve their support and cannot survive. The decision of the operators to fight it out on this line is the natural result of the anti-union propaganda which certain aggressive employers have carried on under cover of the so-called open-shop-campaign. The agreement between the coal operators and the miners' union was the most conspicuous and for a long time one of the most successful examples of collective bargaining in the United States. It was necessary for the prestige of the open-shop movement to break it up and substitute war for conference in the government of the industry. If the operators can succeed in forcing a series of local conferences and agreements, they will place the miners in the different fields in the position of bidding against one another. They can level standards down all over the country and render membership in the union of negligible value. But if the operators are forced to confer and conduct the running of coal under another general agreement, the union will survive as a positive and

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powerful factor in its government. In that event the open-shop campaign will have received a check from which it is not likely to recover. Union labor all over the country will, consequently, rally to the cause of the miners, and will furnish the money and the encouragement which will permit the miners to put up a long and stiff fight. The public will have a clear interest also in encouraging the miners to preserve the union and to protect their existing right of collective bargaining; but it has another and equally important interest. This is, as we have continually insisted, to find out why the production of a public utility such as coal is attended with so much waste, extravagance and mismanagement.

IT is doubtful whether any single pronouncement of the Washington Conference is as significent to the future of China as one sentence in the speech of Sir Charles Addis, head of the British banking group of the China Consortium, to the assembled bankers of New York. "In my judgment," he said, "the time has come for the Consortium to consider the practicability of negotiating independently with an autonomous province or group of provinces for the construction of specific railway undertakings within their respective borders." If that is also to be the judgment of the other banking groups and that judgment is to be acted on, it will be the first step toward the partitioning of China, with all that that means for the peace of the world. Nothing could so quickly and so firmly crystallize the forces of disintegration already at work in China as such a policy. It would put the international banking groups irrevocably into internal Chinese politics. It would give them a vested interest in disintegration. Let it be supposed that the Peking government remains opposed to the Consortium and that the military governors of two Yangtse provinces are pro-Consortium. Suppose they give a concession to the Consortium to construct a railway, partly for the added military strength and the revenue it would give them for their own use and partly in the hope of getting a share of the squeeze on the expenditure for construction—which they would, in one way or another. Would foreign financial influence be for or against their declaring their independence of the central government? Suppose that after two or three years a national movement developed for unification of all provinces under the central government. On what side would the combined financial influence of the Great Powers be arrayed? For unification? What Sir Charles Addis' policy threatens is a return to the spheres of influence in a more virulent form than in the days following the Battle of the Concessions and the Boxer uprising. China needs the development of communications, but not at that price.

FOR the first time since the Paris Conference presented to the Germans the exigencies of the Treaty of Versailles, all the German parties are united in resisting as impossible of performance the specific immediate demands which the administration of the Treaty has finally imposed on them. The Reparations Commission is acting within its legal rights in asking the German government to double within a few months its existing volume of taxation and in introducing other reforms which, if they were humanly possible of performance, might enable Germany to meet her obligations under the Treaty. Germany has contracted to institute any and all changes in domestic policy which the Reparations Commission can devise for the purpose of safeguarding her obligations against default. But the contract has precisely the same value as the promise of a man who is six feet tall to stretch himself to seven feet. He could not do it if he would, and if he tries he can only appear to succeed by virtue of some kind of deceit. The sooner he repudiates the contract the better for him and for the world. The Germans made a mistake in signing a contract which they could not perform and which they did not intend to perform. There will be no recovery for Europe either economically or morally until they say to France and Great Britain: "We cannot and will not redeem our obligations under the existing Treaty, but we recognize our liability to repair the damage we have done and we are willing to negotiate a new contract which conforms to the terms of the armistice and does not impose an impossible burden upon us."

IT remains to be seen whether M. Poincaré will seize the opportunity which the refusal of the Wirth government to meet its obligations affords to invoke the "sanctions" which the Treaty provides as a remedy for such defaults. Before he became premier he usually talked and wrote as if he would favor in the event of default the dispatch of a military force into Germany to collect the bill; but our own guess is that the French army will not march this spring. M. Poincaré and the Reparations Commission both know that they are demanding impossibilities of the German government and they know that if under such circumstances they exact the penalties which the Treaty gives them the right to exact, they will recruit for the Germans a large reenforcement of international sympathy and support. Probably the French

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government will agree to pare down the immediate demands to a point which the German government can perform by continuing the same kind of disastrous sacrifices which it has been obliged to make since and under the London agreement of last year. They will earn another period of probation, to be followed by another default; and the French government will explain to the world how patient and forbearing France is and how impossible it is to deal considerately with a nation which is constitutionally incapable of keeping its word. There are more ways than one of killing a cat. The French have behaved up to date as if they value the penalties for the non-performance of the impossible Treaty rather as a permanent and a terrifying menace than as a sufficient justification for immediate action. If ever they cash in on their "sanctions" the fat is in the fire. They risk everything on their chance to remain the military masters of Europe.

IN an article published in this issue Mr. George Glasgow presents the details of the British Treasury's plan for dealing with the reparations problem. The total sum, fixed in the London ultimatum, reduced by payments and by the exclusion of non-German liabilities, is 110,000,000,000 marks. It is proposed by the British Treasury that this sum be dissected into two parts, 45,000,000,000, which Germany will have to pay in any event, and 65,000,000,000, which Germany will be called upon to pay only in case the inter-Allied claims are enforced. What that amounts to is that if the United States demands the 40,000,000,000 gold marks which England, France and Italy owe, and England demands her 20,000,000,000 marks from France and Italy, Germany will be called on to pay the 110,000,000,000 marks. This is a roundabout way of setting off the inter-Allied claims, in a majority American, against a part of the German indemnity for which there is no warrant whatever in the pre-armistice agreement, and of which there is not the remotest chance of payment. The 45,000,000,000 which Germany will still have to pay amply covers every item of damages except pensions and separation allowances, an item which was illegitimately foisted into the bill in order to increase the British share in whatever Germany might pay. If the British Treasury really desires American cooperation in any scheme of European reconstruction, it would make progress by moving for the cancellation, without any compensation whatever, of the items covering pensions and separation allowances, and the 65,000,000,000 gold marks those items represent.

WE reprint parts of a table from a letter published by Mr. Samuel Untermyer in the Times of April 3rd. It throws a good deal of light on the nature of the profits of industry under the present system of limited competition. The contractor stands between the laborer and the consumer, and charges the consumer a handsome price for the privilege of having the laborer work for him. And still the contractor has the face to talk about deflating labor.

CLASS OF LABOR	PAID MEN	CHGD. CUSTOMERS	P. C. INC.
Common laborers	$6.00	$10.00	66
Rockmen	6.00	10.00	66
Blaster, per week	45.00	72.00	60
Blacksmith's helper	5.00	8.00	60
Watchmen	6.00	10.00	66
Marble Industry Employers' Association.			
Building foreman	$10.00	$16.25	62
Building foreman's polisher	9.00	15.25	67
Setter and helper	16.00	25.75	61
Cutter or setter	16.00	24.50	53
Electrical Contractors' Association.			
Foreman	$10.00	$17.60	76
Journeyman	9.00	14.40	60
Helper	5.50	8.80	60
Association of Architectural Iron Workers.			
Foreman	$10.00	$18.00	80
Helper and man	16.00	36.00	125
Finisher and helper, per week	47.00	144.00	206
Mosaic Employers' Association.			
Setter and helper	$14.50	$22.00	51
Ornamental Bronze and Iron Association.			
Draftsman, per week	$60.00	$147.00	125
Men (unclassified), per hr.	.79	3.00	279

The President's Predicament

THE radical differences of opinion in the Republican party about the bonus legislation have landed President Harding in an awkward predicament from which he seems unable to extricate himself with credit. He accepted the nomination and assumed the Presidency, disposed and pledged to serve as the mouthpiece of his party rather than to impose his leadership upon it. But in relation to many important questions of domestic policy, including the bonus, the party has no dominant will. Its leaders are deeply divided. When left to their own devices they hesitate helplessly among what seem to be equally undesirable alternatives. In their embarrassment some of them have recently entreated the President to take on more of the responsibilities of leadership, but apparently he has refused. He is sore about his treatment by Congress. He has expressed his own convictions about public policy and Congress has almost always ignored them. He prefers composition to warfare.

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He does not wish to place himself at the head of one faction in his party, and to compel the opponents of his adopted policy to accept his leadership or to rebel.

His reluctance may cost his party its majority in the House at the fall elections. The Republican leaders have backed and filled so long about the bonus that public opinion will probably regard any action which they finally take as reprehensible. Yet they must take some action soon if they are to avoid the payment in the fall of a still more costly penalty in votes. A national party is supposed to possess the power of legislating with some measure of speed and efficiency about the problems of the day. The inability or the failure to act in what is considered to be a political emergency is its one inexcusable default and almost infallibly produces and justifies its fall from power. But during a period of transition both in conditions and ideas such as the American nation is now passing through, national parties cannot avoid inflicting the prevailing infirmities of popular conviction. Roosevelt and Wilson used executive leadership to overcome these conflicts. It supplied a method of reaching an agreement among party leaders who were divided from one another by deep differences of outlook and conviction through the compulsion of an aroused public opinion. The leaders in Congress, particularly those of the Republican party, resented the practice. They do not like it now, but they appear unable to pull together without it or to supply a substitute for it.

If the Republican party fails through lack of leadership, it will have no right to complain. It selected Mr. Harding as its candidate chiefly because he was disposed to be complaisant. His nomination was brought about by an extremely complicated group of considerations and forces, but his chief qualification in the eyes of most of the Republican politicians was his lack of initiative. They wanted above everything else a safe President, and they succeeded in picking a man who is so safe that from the point of view of party success he is dangerous. If they cannot obtain from him the kind of leadership which is decisive and aggressive enough to pull them together, it is their own fault.

Even if President Harding were to improvize a passion and gift for leadership, he would in the attempt to make it effective suffer from a severe handicap. He lacks magnetism and the personal authority which a President who acts as the responsible leader of his party and its majority in Congress must necessarily possess. Notwithstanding the prodigious power and prestige of the Presidential office, the man who occupies it does not necessarily exercise the sway over the popular imagination which he needs in order to put up a successful fight against a strong opposition in Congress and in his party. Roosevelt and Wilson had prepared themselves for leadership by forming and arousing public opinion with progressive platforms of their own. When they became President they had conquered a popular following which prevented congressmen from treating their proposals lightly. But Mr. Harding has never earned a following of this kind. If he had he would not now occupy the Presidential chair. The little group of senators who controlled the nomination at the last Republican convention fastened upon him partly because, among other qualifications, he had not developed as a candidate any emphatic popular support. He was a regular politician. He had no eccentric or troublesome convictions. His disposition was to oil his way over and around an obstacle rather than to iron it out. If he changed his spots and tried to become a warrior, an innovator in ideas and an initiator of policies, it would wrench and strain public opinion to take him seriously in his new part.

In their estimate of President Harding the Republican politicians were on the whole right. He is not disposed or qualified to imitate Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson. But in their estimate of the needs of the nation and the rightful exigencies of the Presidential office they went far astray. An American President cannot take orders from Congress indefinitely without falsifying his position and sacrificing the interests of his constituency which is the whole American people. He cannot hand over the leadership of his party to congressmen and senators without inviting party dissensions and conniving at the somewhat irresponsible and factious domination of public policy. If his administration is to possess dignity and influence, he must assert himself both as the head of the government and as the party leader. In spite of Mr. Harding's conciliatory disposition and his sincere desire to work with Congress and his party associates, he cannot and will not allow himself to remain in his present humiliating position. In the interest of the success of his administration and the welfare of his party he must either reach a better understanding with Congress or create an issue on which he can appeal from Congress to the people.

American public opinion will, we hope, penetrate the meaning of his predicament and watch understandingly and sympathetically any attempt at self-extrication. He certainly deserves understanding and sympathy if not support. The New Republic deplored his nomination and opposed his election, but since he assumed office he has proved to be a likeable and thoroughly well-intentioned

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man. He is tolerant, somewhat open-minded and honestly desirous of contributing through his administration to the welfare of all sections and classes of the American people. He is meeting with enormous and unexpected difficulties in realizing his goodwill. His accommodating disposition which figures in his own mind as a desire to harmonize discordant points of view and interests which are entitled to consultation is beginning to look like spinelessness. It is not merely that, but it may produce the same results as an infirmity of will unless he sees the need under the circumstances of adopting different tactics.

Probably he must either fight or fail. He is ill-equipped for a fight, not only because of his lack of personal authority and popular following, but because of his want of aggressive convictions. Like his party and his fellow-countrymen, he is in a transitional state of mind and is no longer sure of his intellectual and moral footing. But in the end he is more likely to fight than he is to sulk or quit. The prerogatives and traditions of his high office call for assertion and his personal credit and the success of his administration depend upon it. The resources of his office in the event of a contest are very great, and in spite of all his handicaps he would have a fighting chance of victory. But he would have to choose his ground carefully and make sure of an issue which he could popularize with the mass of the American people.

What Coal Facts?

IF the Washington hearings on coal mean business, we can foretell where the hot fight will centre. It will centre on the brokerage method of handling "free" coal and on mining investment, cost and profit.

As to the brokerage method, prices are pyramided by resales, and this pyramiding results in "an unexplained high and unconscionable spread," in the statement of the counsel of the Senate Committee on Reconstruction and Production to the Committee on Manufacturers.

"We believe," said the Chairman of the enjoined Federal Trade Commission, "we believe that we could have followed that coal on through up to, let us say, tidewater, where those great prices were being charged, and we would have been able to tell this committee today just what was the intervening cause, and public opinion would have been so informed by our reports that it would have been crystallized or formed also with respect to the situation."

As to profits and the elements of current cost, the National Coal Association proved that such business intimacies were beyond the reach of the Federal Trade Commission, Congress, the government and the public. John D. A. Morrow, as vice-president of the National Coal Association, testified to the Senate Committee on Manufacturers (January 19, 1921):—

> We brought a suit to enjoin the Federal Trade Commission. . . . The cause of the action was primarily the fact that in asking for these reports the Commission made as a part of the order certain instructions with respect to the way the accounts of the mining companies ought to be made up and kept, in order to furnish this information. In other words, the instructions practically amounted, in the view of the coal producers at any rate, to dictation by the Trade Commission as to the cost accounting methods which were to be followed in the industry. . . . How we should determine what should be charged to capital account in the development of the property, and what should be charged to current operating costs was one of the points on which we had a difference of opinion as to the principle. . . . They felt, as I recall it now, that we wanted to charge into current operating account and into expenses, various items which they felt ought to go into capital account.

Huston Thompson, as Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, answered as follows:—

> There was but one thing that we constantly maintained and that is that we should never give up the right to find out just how the various coal companies arrived at their figures. . . . Those who were opposed to this plan were located mostly in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

This unknown region, where facts are forbidden us by the coal operators, is the No-Man's Land where the consumer, the public, are shot to pieces from both camps and all directions.

The coal operators conduct their industry in the spirit of the ancient astrologers and alchemists. It is a mystical vocation, which profane knowledge would cheapen. It may be that the industry cannot pay a living wage to the miner, and that coal will have to be subsidized or that we shall be forced to become a peasant, nomadic and hunting people. Or, as a last resort, perhaps the industry will have to be properly organized, managed and unified. We do not know. Before taking to the woods or fields, we might call for the facts. In demanding the facts, we can reassure ourselves by the spectacle of Senator Frelinghuysen. He has never been rated as a revolutionary person. But on coal he is articulate. He has said:

> Imagine a corporation that did not know how much coal it was burning, how much it was likely to need, what was a reasonable price to pay for coal, and never measured its stock pile except when there were signs of a shortage. Yet that is exactly the position of the people

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> of the United States at this moment. They not only do not know these simple things but their Government can not find out. . . . We can not find out what the costs are because the National Coal Association has put out the eyes of the Government by the injunction in the Maynard Coal Case (an injunction that prevents the Federal Trade Commission from investigating costs of coal production). . . . The Coal lobby has tied the Government's hands and poked out its eyes.

We do not know accurately how much money has been invested in the coal industry. We do not know how much of the book value is water and how much is original investment. So it is impossible to ascertain the percent income on investment. We have no proper basis established in the accounting of the operators for calculating profits. We have no agreed determination of the proper elements of current cost. It was here that the cry of pain went up from the operators, and by injunction they were able to slip back into the mystery of their calling. In the heightened comment of Senator Frelinghuysen, "The whole subject is shrouded in a smoke screen of inky darkness." We do not know accurately the capital value of the coal deposits. We do not know who owns the coal beds. We do not know the royalty rates.

We do not know how much coal is contracted for and sold as contracted, and how much is "free" coal. The excess of production over contracted coal is "free"' coal, and this free coal is sold in the open market. With recurrent scarcity, the price of this leaps to speculative levels. This gambling by certain operators amounts to what Eugene C. Hultman, Fuel Administrator for Massachusetts, termed robbery. He said:

> New England was being robbed of $17,000,000 a year on price alone, irrespective of quality. . . . So far as I can discover there is no real contract in the coal game anywhere, from the consumer to the producer, or vice versa.

What makes the price of coal and who makes it are not known. Dr. Garfield, who had been head of the Fuel Administration, has testified:

> I think it is plain folly not to provide for a continuous finding of the facts as to the cost of production, as to the stocks of coal in hand, as to working conditions in the mines, and as to the cost of living.

What are the wage cuts in the non-union fields, and has the decrease in rates been made up by an increase in the tonnage mined? What are the wages of a miner, and how many hours a week does he work? What are the facts in union fields compared with the facts in non-union fields?

In producing coal we are hacking blindy at the supply, with no national measurement of the policy. We are using the same generous gestures as we used upon the forests. Our justly-famous American initiative has spread itself over coal, with none of the companionship of that other American policy of conservation. Here are a few simple questions that remain unanswered, and yet these questions concern the future well-being of the nation. How much coal is being lost year by year in pillars, in the roof, by squeezes, in thin seams broken in mining lower seams? Is car pushing by human labor, resulting in rupture, to go on for another generation or two? Are the statements of operators on production accurate? What stocks of fuel are regularly carried by consumers? (With stocks known, it will be possible to estimate requirements of coal by using records of past consumption, and checking up for changes in demand.)

What should be the ratings of mines for coal cars? Why were our fatal mining accidents more than double in number in 1919 those of Great Britain and Ireland, although their miners number over fifty percent more than our miners?

For the Senate and House hearings of the next few days we suggest these as some of the main lines of inquiry:

Investments
Cost of producing coal
Profits
Price and reasonableness of the Price
Methods of Production
Spot coal
Speculation by certain operators.

Then as a summary of these detailed questions, we should like to put a few general queries.

For the future, what shall be the relations of our democracy to the secret coal group?

Is Congress powerless to get the costs of coal?

Shall labor pay for the wastes of an over developed and mismanaged industry?

Senator Frelinghuysen under the lusty bludgeonings of the coal lobby and the inertia of the public is growing slightly cynical. Senator Calder is tired. Senator Kenyon has been promoted. Who will push forward beginnings?

Is that veiled journey of the car of coal from the mine to the consumer something too sacred for statistical treatment?

The states and the United States have fulfilled various and difficult duties to the capital-invested-in-coal. Has the capital-invested-in-coal any duties to the public?

Peace has its emergencies no less desperate than war. We grow just as poor in peace as in war. A shortage of coal leaves us just as cold,

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idle and hungry in peace as it did in war. There is no difference in the shiver. But there is a difference in what follows. In war we call the shortage an emergency and we describe coal as a public utility. The present time is one of peace. There is therefore no official emergency and coal is not a public utility. So we now enter a nation-wide coal strike without knowing the facts. We shall emerge from it without knowing the facts, unless we demand them. We submit the time has come for demanding a continuous stream of all the relevant facts. And the way to get them is

An exposure of the need for them by a government commission, leading to

A permanent federal fact-finding agency, with compulsory powers, coordinating and strengthening the present governmental agencies. (These agencies are the Geological Survey, Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Bureau of Mines, Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

Facts are an instrument of control. The nature of the control is common consent, instead of autocratic will or special interest. It is the only kind of control that blends a scientific method with democratic appeal.

To Stabilize the German Mark

PRIMARILY the value of the mark is a German internal problem. The Germans themselves suffer most from the irresistible gravitation of the mark to lower and lower levels. Our own economic life has afforded sufficient evidence of the disturbing effects of a standard fluctuating in purchasing power. Public finance and private relations have alike been embarrassed by the "increased cost of living," or in other words, by the depreciated dollar. We have had costly strikes, and the more costly, though less appreciated phenomenon of the restless movement of workers from job to job in the process of adjustment to a higher scale of prices. We have had an epoch of unhealthy speculation followed by depression and widespread unemployment. But our dollar at its worst in 1920 was worth very nearly half as much as the dollar of 1914. What if it had shrunk to the value of a three cent postage stamp? That is what has happened to the mark. And it is likely to go lower.

Either the exponents of the virtues of sound money have been altogether wrong, or the German economic system must have been shorn of a great part of its vigor by the fluctuations and persistent decline in the mark. Does anyone doubt that the latter is the case? The functioning of the German economic system, however, is an international interest of the first importance. For Germany is bound by sound morals as well as by the pre-armistice agreement, which she freely subscribed while she still had arms in her hands, to make good the damages she inflicted upon the civil population of the Allies and their property. Cut off the injurious and dishonest excesses of the Treaty of Versailles, which substituted the principle of indemnity for the principle of reparations, and there would still remain some ten billions of dollars, of which less than two billions have been paid in cash and kind, when deduction is made of occupation costs, which by treaty and ancient precedent come extra. Reckoning interest at five per-cent and amortization at one percent—enough to sink the debt in thirty-five years—Germany can not meet her just obligations with anything less than $500,000,000 a year. Is that beyond her powers? In her present condition, it is. But if her internal economic relations were put on a stable and orderly basis—which means, first of all, currency reform—if occupation charges were fixed at a reasonable minimum, and if the incubus of indemnity charges in excess of the legitimate ten billion dollars were removed, Germany would, we believe, be able to meet the $500,000,000 charge, after a moratorium of a year or two, for recovery from the mischief of post war Allied policy. The Allies, with their thirty billions of extortionate indemnity claims, have killed all hope the Germans might have of working themselves out. Therefore everything in Germany is hopeless and at loose ends: government finance, legitimate reparations payments, industrial relations. France and Belgium are forced to forego the German payments to which they have a moral right and the British—and the Americans too—are forced to encounter cut throat competi tion from German production. The whole world suffers depression from the German economic breakdown which finds its most palpable expression in the decline of the mark.

The economic and financial condition of Germany, then, is not Germany's concern alone. It is also the concern of the Allied powers. Chancellor Wirth's protest "against the principle of outside interference in the sovereign rights and lawmaking powers of the German nation" needs qualification on this score. If it were practicable for the Allies to bring order into German currency and finance by simply prescribing higher taxes and the separation of the banking system from government credit operations the "principle of self-determination" could hardly be invoked by the Germans. Self-determination is necessarily limited so

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long as a nation's territory is occupied and an indemnity unpaid. But the crucial point is that no such proceeding is practicable. Germany is not meeting the Allied demands for payment because her economic system is not functioning properly. Sixty billion marks of additional taxes will not make it function. Neither would the throwing of the German government into the hands of Allied receivers. The Allied governments and the Reparations Commission will be in a position to make effective suggestions on German finance and currency when they are ready to offer hope of ultimate liberation, instead of a threat of the application of increased force. Not arrogance, but stupidity, is the salient characteristic of the recent proposals of the Reparations Commission. And the stupidity is probably not peculiar to the Commission, which doubtless knew that its proposal of reforms would make matters worse, but rather to the Allied governments and to the peoples who have been deluded into the expectation of unlimited loot. Apparently the time is not yet ripe for common sense.

When common sense prevails the Allied powers will offer to cut down the indemnity to the legitimate figure for reparations—ten billions, interest bearing, less such sums as Germany has already paid. They will demand that Germany order her currency in such a way as to give a fair stability of purchasing power. This means freeing currency and banking entirely from the vicissitudes of government finance. A separate organ of administration, independent of parliament, would have to be put in control of the currency and of banking. It would accept the current value of the mark and seek to hold it at this value, through manipulating the discount rate and through the retirement of marks when prices rose and reissue when prices fell. This could be managed, without resort to the taxing power of the state, if the currency control were possessed of power to buy gold or gold exchange with marks when prices in marks were falling, and to sell gold exchange for marks when prices were rising. Thus currency deflation or inflation could be effected as the movement of prices required.

Such a plan would stabilize marks with respect to prices, not with respect to gold. It would offer a stable standard, but not the gold standard. And this will appear shocking to those who regard the gold standard as the final term in currency progress. We do not so regard it. We see no surpassing virtue in a monetary standard which imperceptibly siphons away the purchasing power now of one class, now of another, through the alternations of depreciation and appreciation. But even if we believed the gold standard to be the best practicable basis of currency, we should still have to recognize that it will be many years before most of the nations of Europe can afford that standard. They have to attain to currency stability in some other way. And Germany could attain to it through an independent organ of currency control sufficiently supplied with credit to effect such deflation or inflation as price conditions might warrant.

With currency stability the workman would know, when he entered upon a contract of employment, that his standard of living would not be impaired so long as its term held. The business man would know, when he undertook a productive operation, that his reasonable expectations of profit would not be defeated by currency fluctuations. The budget makers would know how to gauge their tax levies. True, gold exchange, needed for payments abroad, would fluctuate with changes in the value of gold. This would necessitate a certain elasticity in public revenues, but no greater elasticity than would be required under any other standard.

Germany, to put it baldly, is an Allied interest, so long as her payable obligations are unpaid. It is good business to put that property into earning condition. Two things are requisite to that end, the restoration of hope of ultimate liberation, and the ordering of the internal economic scheme of life. The first lies exclusively in the hands of the Allies. They alone can cut off the baleful excrescences of the indemnity. The second lies theoretically in the hands of the Germans themselves, but is practically attainable only through the pressure of the creditors of Germany, a pressure that can be exerted not by threat of violence, but by the offer of a rational readjustment of their claims.

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Pragmatic America

IN a recent number of the Freeman Bertrand Russell writes: "The two qualities which I consider superlatively important are love of truth and love of our neighbor. I find love of truth in America obscured by commercialism of which pragmatism is the philosophical expression; and love of our neighbor kept in fetters by Puritan morality." The statement comes to us with double importance. For it is obviously dictated by Mr. Russell's own love of truth and love for us as his neighbor. Police records and newspaper columns do not seem to indicate that Puritanism is effective in fettering our love for our neighbor's wife however much it restricts our love for him. If pragmatism is the intellectual reflection of commercialism, pragmatists seem to be assured of a speedy victory of their philosophy in England and the continent of Europe; for there are rumors, apparently authentic, that commercialism exists in strength in these outlying parts of the world. But such matters may be passed over, especially as Mr. Russell tells us that he is aware that the evils he finds in us are not unknown in the rest of the world, and that he urges their potency among us because we are more complacent, more boastful of our "idealism," less possessed of a critical minority than is the old world.

Mr. Russell is probably not entirely alone in the world in regarding love of truth and of neighbor as the two supreme human excellences. In the United States there are those who agree, at least in profession. The fact that the belief had some currency before he voiced it makes it the more important to consider the state of these virtues, and the power of their enemies among us. One otherwise attractive line of discussion is closed to us. We cannot cite evidence that we compare favorably with the rest of humanity in love of truth, and possibly a little more than favorably in respect to love of neighbors. For such a method turns against us. It is just another sample of our obdurate complacency, of the rationalizing idealization with which we obscure our critical perception of the truth.

The suggestion that pragmatism is the intellectual equivalent of commercialism need not, however, be taken too seriously. It is of that order of interpretation which would say that English neo-realism is a reflection of the aristocratic snobbery of the English; the tendency of French thought to dualism an expression of an alleged Gallic disposition to keep a mistress in addition to a wife; and the idealism of Germany a manifestation of an ability to elevate beer and sausage into a higher synthesis with the spiritual values of Beethoven and Wagner. Nor does the figure of William James exist in exact correspondence with a glorification of commercialism. The man who wrote that "callousness to abstract justice is *the* sinister feature of United States civilization," that this callousness is a "symptom of the moral flabbiness born of the exclusive worship of the bitch-goddess SUCCESS," and that this worship "together with the squalid cash interpretation put upon the word success is our national disease" was not consciously nor unconsciously engaged in an intellectual formulation of the spirit he abhorred. Nor was Charles Peirce conspicuous for conformity to commercial standards. Emotional irritation coexists in our humanity with the consideration that love of truth is a superlative good, and it is capable upon occasion of blinding that love.

Nevertheless, there is something instructive about our spiritual estate in the fact that pragmatism was born upon American soil, and that pragmatism presents consequences as a test and a responsibility of the life of reason. Historically the fact is testimony to "Anglo-Saxon" kinship; it is testimony to spiritual kinship with Bacon, who wrote that "truth and utility are the very same thing, and works themselves are of greater value as pledges of truth than as contributing to the comforts of life"; who taught that the end and the test of science and philosophy are their fruits for the relief and betterment of the estate of humanity; while also holding that converting science and philosophy to immediate fruitage for lucre and reputation is their curse. American pragmatism is testimony that the tradition of Bacon carried on in divers ways by Hobbes, Locke and Hume has taken root here.

Yet there is special significance in the fact that this tradition was first revived and then made central by Peirce and James in the United States. Anyone who wishes to take a census of our spiritual estate (along with the censorship implied in a census) will assuredly find the pragmatic spirit important. It is a commonplace, however, that strength and weakness, excellence and defect, go together, because they are the two sides of the same thing. If, therefore, love of truth is to express itself in a discriminating way, it must be willing to attach itself to our sense that consequences are the test and the token of responsibility in the operation of intelligence until its significance is extracted. It is not in the first instance a question of the truth

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of this feeling. The disposition may be, if you please, as obnoxious to ultimate philosophic truth as it is repellent to certain temperaments. But first we have to find out what it means, what it means for both good and bad. Love of truth is manifest in desire to understand rather than in hurry to praise and blame.

A conviction that consequences in human welfare are a test of the worth of beliefs and thoughts has some obvious beneficial aspects. It makes for a fusion of the two superlatively important qualities, love of truth and love of neighbor. It discourages dogmatism and its child, intolerance. It arouses and heartens an experimental spirit which wants to know how systems and theories work before giving complete adhesion. It militates against too sweeping and easy generalizations, even against those which would indict a nation. Compelling attention to details, to particulars, it safeguards one from seclusion in universals; one is obliged, as William James was always saying, to get down from noble aloofness into the muddy stream of concrete things. It fosters a sense of the worth of communication of what is known. This takes effect not only in education, but in a belief that we do not fully know the meaning of anything till it has been imparted, shared, made common property. I well remember the remark of an unschooled American pioneer, who said of a certain matter that some day it would not only be found out, but it would be known. He was ignorant of books, but he declared the profound philosophy that nothing is really known till it operates in the common life.

Any such attitude is clearly a faith, not a demonstration. It too can be demonstrated only in *its* works, its fruits. Therefore it is not a facile thing. It commits us to a supremely difficult task. Perhaps the task is too hard for human nature. The faith may demonstrate its own falsity by failure. We may be arrested on the plane of commercial "success;" we may be diverted to search for consequences easier to achieve, and may noisily acclaim superficial and even disastrous "works" and fruits as proof of genuine success instead of evidence of failure. We not only may do so, but we actually are doing so. If the course of history be run, if our present estate be final, no honest soul can claim that success exceeds failure. Perhaps this will always remain the case. Humanity is not conspicuous for having made a successful job of life anywhere. But an honest soul will also admit that the failure is not due to inherent defects in the faith, but to the fact that its demands are too high for human power; that mankind is not up to making good the requirements of the faith, or at least that that part of a common humanity which inhabits these United States is not up to it, and that the experiment must be passed on to another place and time.

Yet the gloomiest view reminds us of another phase of the pragmatic faith. Undoubtedly in expressing his sense of a world still open, a world still in the making, William James reported, perhaps with some superfluous accretions of romanticism to his native idiom, a characteristic feature of the American scene. Be the evils what they may, the experiment is not yet played out. The United States are not yet made; they are not a finished fact to be categorically assessed. Mr. James' assertion that the world is still making does not import a facile faith. He knew well that the world has also its madeness, and that what is done and over with fearfully complicates the task of making the future that human better we should like it to be.

A discriminating spiritual census of the United States will, therefore, ask about the already made things which we inherit and which mix with our creative making to arrest, divert and pervert it. After all we inherit from a Europe which was, compared with our scene, a made affair. Every day our cities are eloquent of the past fruits of a feudal Europe. His power far exceeds mine who can tell just how much of our present ill is due to the commercialism which is of our making and how much is due to deposit of an ancient feudalism. Commerce itself, let us dare to say it, is a noble thing. It is intercourse, exchange, communication, distribution, sharing of what is otherwise secluded and private. Commercialism like all isms is evil. That we have not as yet released commerce from bondage to private interests is proof of the solidity and tenacity of our European heritage. Commerce in knowledge, in intelligence, is still a side-issue, precarious, spasmodic, corrupt. Pragmatic faith walks in chains, not erect.

One other heritage of things already made still has to be reckoned with, reckoned with in social practice as well as in formulation. These United States were born when the pragmatic and experimental faith of the English tradition was in eclipse. Bacon did not exaggerate the control of nature to be obtained from study of nature. But he enormously underestimated that inertia of social forces which would resist free application of the new power to the relief and betterment of the human estate, and which would effect a private monopolization of the fruits of the new power of knowledge. Those who were called liberals lost their faith in experimental method. They were seduced into desiring a creed as absolute, as final, as eternal as that wielded by their opponents. The dogma of natural rights of the

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individual was the product. The pioneer, agrarian American scene was a congenial home for the new dogma. We tied ourselves down to political and legal practices and institutions radically hostile to our native disposition and endeavor. Legalism, along with feudalized commercialism, wedded to commercialism, is the anti-pragmatic "made" which hinders and perverts our pragmatic makings. It is incarnate in constitutions and courts. The resulting situation is not one which calls for complacency. But the beginning of improvement is to place responsibility where it belongs.

Our noisy and nauseating "idealism" is an expression of the emotions which would cover and disguise a mixed situation. There is a genuine idealism of faith in the future, in experiment directed by intelligence, in the communication of knowledge, in the rights of the common man to a common share in the fruits of the spirit. This spirit when it works does not need to talk. But its workings are paralyzed here, arrested there, and more or less corrupted everywhere by a feudalized commercialism and a legalism which we cover up with eloquent speeches because we do not honestly confront them. Discrimination is the first fruit of love of truth and of love of neighbor. Till we discriminate we shall oscillate between wholesale revulsion and the sloppy idealism of popular emotion.

JOHN DEWEY.

The Raggle-Taggle Gypsies

"I'm off with the raggle-taggle gypsies, O!"
—Old Song.

WHEN spring has come again, and the sap begins to stir in the veins of the straw-hat makers and the old gentlemen who play golf, the carnival folk know that they are soon for the road, and in their winter quarters they begin great preparations, of which the chief ingredient is plenty of red paint—and a little that is bright blue, or gold, or white.

"The general color scheme of the wagons this year," proudly writes R—— J—— from winter quarters in Tennessee, "will be the same as last year—red, with chrome yellow gear." Bless his heart, of course it will! What else can give so much class and flash—to use the phrase dearest to the carnival heart—as plenty of bright red, with yellow wheels, and a big buck nigger to drive, in a blue uniform with white epaulets the size of small doormats?

But you do not know the carnival folk? Then you must permit me to introduce you:

It is evening, it is Iowa, it is June. . . . On our right, as we stand on the outskirts of the little town, are the long rows of the shoulder-high corn; if there were light enough we could see the endless fields of it stretching away over the small rolling hills, the slow pulse of the prairie. But it is too dark for that and for the frame houses on our left, set among the planted elms and cottonwoods. Most of these houses have rosebushes along the porch, a signal that the dweller within has accepted Things as They Are, and is making the best of them.

Our attention is called stridently from these mere normalities to the erstwhile vacant lot across the street—vacant last week, and next, but tonight a busy canvas city of square and round tents, some big, mostly smallish, all illumined from within by flaring gasoline torches. These fabric-shrouded lights cast a queer glare on trampled grass, mud and strong guy ropes fastened to battered iron-bound wooden pegs, whose heads are frayed from incessant thumping. But these visual impressions are only incidental to the turbulent current of sound which pours over us. At least three brass bands are playing popular airs, *not* in unison; a calliope (pronounced in three syllables, cally-ope) is uttering its hysterical and inhuman notes, and four or five voices are shouting hoarsely, rather wearily, yet with an uncanny skill in husbanding resources so as to keep it up for hours and still not perish of sore throat. Let us edge our way cautiously among the tent-ropes and hear them:

"Only a nickel, a-half-a-dime, the twentieth paht of a dollah! . . . The little lady dahnces this dahnce at each and every puhfohmance just as it was puhfohmed before the Shah of Persia" . . . "They're freshly roasted, people!" . . . "Just a moment, just a moment, ladies and gentlemen, over this way, step closer, please, learn about the sinetific marvel of all the ages" . . . "You cahn't fail to win a prize—no blanks, all prizes, every time the wheel spins, every time" . . . "Jizko, the mysterious ape-man, the living proof of evvy-lution, captured in the wild jungles of the Amazon after killing seven natives" . . . "A show for the ladies, a show for the children, a show for the men" . . . "You've seen other dahncers, you've never seen a dancer like Zalilah and you never will!" . . .

But in spite of his pessimism, some of us *will* see Zalilah, and on the instant. She has been

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standing beside the "talker" on a little square platform, while the yokels trample the mud and sparse grass before her. She is dressed in the gorgeous costume of a Sultana, red cotton skirt and white cheesecloth bodice spattered with cut jewels, blue and red and yellow, obviously worth millions and millions, and all bought second-hand from Garstein, Cleveland, Ohio (order by mail or wire, give bust measure, we ship the same day). Zalilah stands stockstill, chewing gum and gazing haughtily over the heads of the Iowans in the mud. She is part of the ballyhoo, and she will not dance until the performance begins inside the tent—and not much, even then.

At a signal, the "talker" stops, Zalilah turns and ducks between the flaps, and the "grinder" strikes up his monotonous sing-song. The "grinder" sits on high in a narrow bright-blue painted box, something like a coffin out for a holiday. He sells tickets, tearing them off a big perforated roll, and short-changing you if you seem sufficiently stupid. As he sells, his voice cuts through the soft summer air like a rusty blade: "Twenty-five cents! Twenty-five cents! Only a quarter to see Little Egypt and her famous Egyptian dancing girls direct from Con-stan-ty-nople! Rescued from the Sultan's private harem by American missionaries. Their dance is different!—I'll say it is!—I don't describe it, I just say it's different! Twenty-five, and seventy-five's a dollar! Thank you! Three for you, and twenty-five's a dollar. Thank you! After you've seen it, tell your friends to go."

The tents are pitched about three sides of an irregular oblong, in which the crowd mills like restless cattle, as the ballyhoos begin before one show or another, carefully timed so as not to tread on one another's heels. The more pretentious entertainments carry "banners" on which Neolithic artists have portrayed the wonders within. Here is the snake-charmer in evening dress of royal blue, her face and arms done in the solid brown of shoe-leather. All about her and about, are twined her serpents; they are as thick through the middle as a small stovepipe. Their fearful reptilian heads are on a level with her own; their jaws, as they gaze at her, are open to the widest extent. Do they yawn, bored by the tranquility of the saddle-tinted charmer? Not so; any child in Iowa can tell you that the open mouth means ferocity.

Not all the entertainments are of this order. A carnival, I might explain for those benighted denizens of cities who know only the circus, is a group of ten or twenty tent shows, riding devices, sales booths and the like, which travel together and descend upon a village for a few days or a week to despoil the inhabitants of their surplus money in all the ways which long experience has shown to be efficacious. The most popular, perhaps, are the Eli wheel (Ferris wheel), the Whip (a horizontal merry-go-round device with a magnificently horrible sideways jerk in it), swings, both rotary and on the order of the pendulum, tent shows, and concessions—little retail stores selling all the useless gimcracks people will buy when they are out for a holiday.

In towns where the municipal authorities are not too strict, games of chance are used. "Paddle-wheels" and similar variations of roulette are high in the affections of the carnival man. Of late years, however, the country has become discouragingly moral. Soon Carnival will have been made over into something hopelessly respectable, efficient in a big business way and as prosaic as a salesmen's convention in the phonograph trade.

Thank goodness, that day is not yet. Carnival is still Circus's little sister, with a bar sinister in her coat of arms—though her house is as ancient as humanity itself. All the strolling players of all time are among her forebears. The vagabond clowns who tramped French roads five centuries ago, the jongleurs who carried westward the tale of Richard Coeur de Lion in his dungeon, the ancient Greeks who brought the Dionysian revels from town to town in their grape-stained two-wheeled carts, the first temple dancers on the shores of Mother Ganges—all these ghostly troupes look down today and see Carnival their sole remaining representative in the western world. The people, the good everyday folk who read no books, see no pictures, hear no music that Walter Damrosch would dignify with the name, whose only contact with the twentieth century is through movies and Fords, turn to Carnival as naturally as primitive peoples the world over turn to the orgiastic revels of the sacred seed time in spring. Under the stars, to the tune of last season's best selling popular song, in an atmosphere perfumed with pop-corn, crushed grass and red-hots, the latter day Amaryllis and her swain move happily among the gasoline flares and achieve without knowing it, the escape from reality for which all men seek.

In only one important particular do our modern gypsies of the world of carnival differ from their Romany brothers of old; the printing press has touched them and they have a magazine in which to tell one another their troubles and boast their triumphs. The special spring edition, issued when the green fever of the road is at its height, sells 100,000 copies, and in its fascinating pages you may read the epic of the trade.

Winterbottom's Gorgeous Colossal Combined Carnival, wintering in Georgia where the monkeys won't die of pneumonia, advertises for "plantation performers doubling in brass. All with me before,

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write," says the open-hearted manager, and adds a significant "Mr. B—— no longer with show. Salaries paid out of office." Under what circumstances, one wonders, were salaries paid last year when Mr. B—— was among those present? Another carnival invites correspondence from "wheels, palmistry, roll-downs and huckley bucks." This ambitious carnival also wants "athletic show, snake show, platform shows, or any show of merit." In a Kentucky town, members of the fraternal order of the Mystic Shrine will give a circus and will be aided therein by professional carnival folk. For this affair, one high-class aerial act is wanted. Also "troupe of at least five fortune-tellers in oriental costumes. Have space for hoopla, pitch-till-you-win, knife and cane rack."

"Can play return date any place we have shown," is the proud boast of another carnival director, who warns that he wants "no girl shows or stealem stores." However, he would consider booking "Sawing a Woman in Two." Sometimes these advertisements seek to guarantee the prosperity of the enterprise. "This show will positively be the first show into the money spots of the Virginias." If you have a spare merry-go-round on your person, you may spend a summer with Higgins' Imperial Shows, and thereby salve a wounded heart. "Account of disappointment, will book merry-go-round to join at once," Mr. Higgins confesses. "Concessions all open. Wanted for plantation, sketch teams and singles. No grift, kootchie, or cabaret. Ladies joining must be real ladies, not too young." The deplorable trend toward morality is all too plainly evident in Mr. Higgins. "Grift" is a term applied to various ways of stealing money; kootchie, of course, is a well-known dance which is still considered improper when performed by a lady alone, though our polite ballrooms approach it more nearly every year. "Cabaret," a term roughly synonymous with "girl show," describes an enterprise rather too directly Dionysian for the present standards in Iowa, though there is a surprising difference among communities in this regard. Some towns won't have any carnival at any price. Others welcome everything except the "wheels." Gambling devices are occasionally advertised as "permitted in no-wheel places." "Goes well in no-wheel territory," says one announcement, "and goes still better in open towns."

Even the followers of this, the most fascinating of professions, are sometimes out of jobs, and then we may learn in their own words something of their qualities. "At liberty," says one gentleman, in the orthodox theatrical locution. "Professional tattoo artist, carrying flashy outfit, using electric table; none like it on the road. Also first-class boss canvas man, sew, splice, get your pit show up and down. Wife can work electric chair, snakes, or walk sharp-sword ladder." The word "flashy" is a term of commendation, not reproach, in this business where the daily problem is to catch the attention of thick-wits. A "pit show" means no more than one wherein a large tent is filled with various "attractions" each of which is in a separate canvas compartment.

Your true gypsy must always put his best foot foremost. "A one-man band" modestly asserts that his is "the greatest array of comical talent ever assembled in any one human being." A female impersonator observes that his vampire dance knocks them cold; so does his oriental. Rare is the pessimist like a bandman who asks "A position where I can change from the trumpet to the French horn, or can quit the music business for a real livelihood. No job too small." A lady wistfully asks for "a lady partner (colored) for a musical act, not too young. Must be refined and medium-weight." (The restriction so often mentioned regarding ladies, "not too young" is an effort to head off stage-struck schoolgirls, regarding whom the police have an inconvenient habit of inquiring.)

Are you ambitious to be a "talker" orating twenty times daily in the preliminary "ballyhoo" which brings together the crowd for the "grinder?" For the insignificant sum of one dollar you may buy a "canned spiel" all complete. "This," says its enthusiastic author, "is a real opening—a convincing door talk by a master mind, suitable for Hawaiian village or girl show. Only limited number of copies left." Obviously, a man who can write a "spiel" which goes equally well under the dual conditions specified, is wasting his talent, and should be writing bonus messages for President Harding, addressed both to the Secretary of the Treasury and the American Legion.

It is easy, of course, for sophisticated big-town people to turn up their noses at poor Madame Carnival and her fly-by-night troupers, pitching their tents week after week through the summer all across these broad United States. It is true that their entertainment is crude, their formulae conventional, their red-hots indigestible. Their legitimate enterprises are fringed with dishonesty which ranges from crooked gambling devices to strong-arm work. Why should anyone care what becomes of these obscure devotees of rides, concessions and pits?

The answer, as I have already hinted, is that Carnival is for the people, by the people, and of the people, popular. Into the dull lives of thousands on thousands it brings the touch of gaiety, adventure, the romance of strange exotic things. There is not much fun in being a farmhand in

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Iowa, or the "hired girl" who shovels out the victuals for that all-devouring farmhand. But when night comes down across the prairie, the bands begin to play within the lighted canvas palace, the grinders and talkers roar their spiels, and the costumed performers in the ballyhoo stand gazing haughtily upon the heads of their marvelling audience—then, if you are not too proud to understand, you may read in the faces of the crowd the answer to the riddle and know why Carnival is the heir of all the playerfolk of bygone times.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Three in a Ditch

ONCE a ribald young man said to my mother: "Mother you ought not to give father that 'three in a ditch.' If the doctor says he should have it, I will send you something to pour down a gentleman," and he sent a case of Blue Ribbon.

It occurred to me that this phrase described an appetite of my own. I began as soon as I was born. They tell me that my mother could always put me to sleep by reading aloud to me. Before I had learned my letters I used to lie on the floor in the library with my chin in my palms and look at the dictionary, and a history of sculpture which contained a good deal of reflection for an infant mind—for example—a man and five boys tied in a snake, and a bull with two heads and curly hair like my cousin Libby Mitchell's that was done on a stick. The dictionary still looks as if a three years' assault of a natural thirst for anything there is to learn, had left it beyond repair. It will never be a good dictionary again.

I do not remember when or how I learned to read. I can remember teasing my mother when she paused for digressions of comment or reminiscence.

"Yes, but read"—I would say.

Now, in schools of organic education they do not encourage children to read before twelve. Twelve is the fashionable age. The nice age then was six, I think. I always did what was nice until I was twenty-two, so it must have been at six that I entered into the world I was to inhabit so long. It was then that life became in reality for me, an open book. The days I remember best in my childhood except the one when I was taken to the state penitentiary and that Friday when I came home from Miss Wilder's room with a silver quarter on a blue ribbon for having kept the head of the room in the spelling match for a week—except these two, the marked days were when I lay on the floor of the library with a book and plate of plums and the light from the stained glass window straying over me, and read. I suppose I did other things but this is the way I remember it.

I read straight through our library inclusive of Behold the Woman (a translation from the French) and Josephus' Life of the Jews. The day my grandmother died, I read Pickwick Papers entire. It is the only time in my life I have ever had reading enough at a single session. I suppose nobody noticed me and I stayed with it all day without a waver of the eye-lash. On other days, people were continually appearing on a London or tropical or heroic scene and saying, "Now, dear, go out and get some exercise." They were always trying to drive me out to jump rope, when I wanted to learn about the human race and what it was at.

I often look at our library now. It looks so small and modest and tame—no sets of full calf—nothing especially sophisticated. But it was enough. That is, for eight or ten years it was enough. There were the canonical sets of Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, Hugo, Hawthorne, Shakespeare, and Louisa Alcott and several volumes of lives and letters like those of Harriet Martineau and The Life and Correspondence of H. More. All were bound in red or brown or green cloth with gold lettering. I read them all. I read Les Misérables nine times, skipping extraneous matter like the battlefield of Waterloo. Fateful episodes in the life of Fantine washed over my feet, but again and again I devoured the bishop, the nun telling the lie, the clamber over the convent wall, Marius listening, the sewer. Almost the first things I looked for when I went to Paris the first time, were the sewers. Hugo had said they were so large. I always liked novels with desert islands—and later when I grew sentimental I liked them where they married and learned to love afterward, and especially, anywhere he kissed her when she was asleep. There was a person called the Duchess who wrote such novels and I read them up in a big willow tree dangling on a gnarly limb.

When I was thirteen, one of the eighteen remarkable things of my life happened. My brother was born. I had been told that I was to have a brother but a theoretical brother had not struck me as news. The appearance of that fat, bald, rosy prize-fighter was the boundary line into a new territory of experience. The nurse used to meet me at the end of the boulevard every day as I returned from high school swinging books on a strap. It was never a punishment to have to take care of him when gentle Tilly was told off for house duty. I began on him at once—my first

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convert. I could always keep him quiet by reading to him. In his long dress—they had long babies in those days—I would establish him in a large tufted chair close at hand and play The Gypsy Camp and the exercises of Monsieur Czerny to him, and read him Les Misérables.

All through the strange years of youth I ate books. Like Lincoln, I read them and I devoured them—with love, with joy, with abandon. I saved Blithedale Romances three years because it was the last of Hawthorne's four and when it was gone, I would never have one to read again. In high school, I took on as a confrère another girl as bad as myself. She is doing it yet. Her mind is like a wide, beautiful, tessellated pavement with great works of art and lesser, criticism and university extension lectures hammered into it as tight as they can be laid together—without a crack. We began the great moderns. We kept lists of the books we had not yet read. I came upon one of mine not long ago. The first three entries were Sharp's Life of Rossetti, Napoleon—Imbert St. Amand, and Coriolanus. I adored Marius The Epicurean. A queer diet for a girl of sixteen, Pater. It is the age when elegance is greater to one than the Lord's day, and we are making that voyage around ourselves which Zola speaks of. One grave young man who has since become a coal baron used to arraign me for being morbid and I still have healthy sea tales with desert islands that he gave me to counteract this tendency. I had fevers. One of the worst was Hamlet. It lasted intermittently from the age of eighteen to thirty-five and one summer I almost fell in love with a young man with pernicious anaemia because he liked Peterkin Papers and Hamlet as well as I did.

Well, it went on for forty-six years. When I went abroad a young English missionary took me on and tried to attack the towers of rationalization with the Christian church. I looked like his cousin Constance who had gone as missionary to the Chinese and so he felt a responsibility. I grew used to having him about, acting distressed, but one day he came dashing up, tore Landor's Imaginary Conversations which had somehow heretofore escaped me and which I had found in the ship's library, from my hand, and said with irritation:

"Here you are reading a book and the white cliffs of Dover on the other side of the ship. I knew I would have to find you." We walked around and sure enough, there it was—England that I had been reading about for many years.

When I had an operation, the doctor said: "Give this young lady a drop light. She is very literary." I read Nicholas Nickleby all the day before the operation. I was far beyond Dickens by this time—doing Nietzsche and Hazlitt—but I can recommend Mrs. Nickleby and the gentleman who threw the cabbages over the wall for the days before operations. In the evening after I came out of the ether I begged the young house surgeon who came in to take blood pressures to bring me a book on the intestinal tract.

Once I was waiting for a friend to go to the opera and I picked up from her table the letters of Kate Greenaway.

"Here is my ticket, Mary. I'm not going. Couldn't you get Amy?"—I said when she came down.

A friend of my mother's told me that she was dressed for her wedding a little too early. Everybody drifted off to get ready themselves. She sat down, lost herself in a book and was searched out in full war paint—veil, gloves and white kid prayer book in her lap, reading The Newcomes, and oblivious to time. I understand that woman. Books have been husband, lover and child to me as they came so near being to her.

I went on for forty-six years. Then something happened. I came upon an Irishman who was just as much interested in life as I was and who had never, so far as I ever learned, read a single book. It happened that for a considerable time I was thrown by an accident of fate into his society. He was one of those persons who is interested in everything, but he was especially interested in human beings, animals, and the earth, —the living things in short. He was always doing something—gardening, painting, covering furniture, helping the widow on one side strip her grape vines, or the gentleman on the other with his German police dogs. He began to observe my curious habits almost at once because they were so foreign to him, and he would glance with a kind of arrested and quickened attention at any book I had in hand.

"Why," he would say, "there are real things to do and here you sit reading a book. What's the good of that? Come out in the woods."

If he had been a dull person, I would soon have resigned the position of chief assistant plumber, electrician, gardener, veterinary, house painter, and cabinet maker in which I found myself, but he was a more vivid person than I, and I trailed him like the stellar wake of a comet. It was a revelation to me to see him in the woods. I had always thought highly of the woods. But something seemed to pass from them to him. He seemed to drink something from the air. He wanted to take up everything and carry it home. Once he backed a van up into an old bridle path

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and filled it with ferns and adder tongue and yellow violets to the doors. I was outclassed on my own ground-life. Of course I was ready or I would not have done it, but for two years—the two years that he was about—I read only three books, and I insinuated those—mostly on railroad trains.

I had had forty-six years of solid reading—I read the literary supplement before the news of the great powers, and then I had two years of no reading at all. What happened? It made me think. How did I come to be like that and then how did I come to change? Now, what does it really do to anyone, I asked myself, to read a great many books?

I am familiar with the theory, of course, that books are our way of getting vicarious experience. I have heard it maintained through hours of good talk. But I never went the whole way with these debaters. I do not hold vicarious experience in such accusation as they do. To me it seems that many of the great figures of the world have had little of what we call experience. Jesus, Nietzsche, Turgeniev. They have lived more in the race than within an individual sphere—in what Trigant Burrow calls our organic consciousness. I do not seem to see in the people about me that it is those whose lives are empty who read a good deal and those who have full lives who do not read. It seems to be the other way. I do not think of reading as a substitute. It is a sort of exterior supply. We do not get life enough. We are made like that. There are people who have some gland defect, and when we make it up to them in tablets, they get all right. Of course this is the gland of a pig and not our own gland, but, after all, we might as well live on his gland as on his flank.

Reading is the urge in us to live. We cannot get enough life de facto. It is not enough to commit a murder oneself. I suppose there may be murders that are exciting but most of them seem to be only the quick gesture of a rather limited person whose brain, when things darken about him, darkens with them. Committing a murder oneself seems to be too cold, passionless and dull to get the average person very far. But in the hour that you read Electra even if you never move from the shade of an oak tree, you taste the horror and continuity of that awful logic we call fate. Some people are involved in the agony of hate and conviction which leads to a great murder, but that is wearing and the after effects are bad, I suppose, unless you have the Euripedian soul. I think we read because we can live away by this means into experience, not safely, as the talkers to whom I have listened, say, but fully.

And then why do we stop reading? Because stopping or going on does not so much matter. It is experience that matters. You can get experience out of reading maybe, and maybe you cannot get it out of murdering seventeen wives. I do not know how one is to come into this ability for getting experience. By reading perhaps—perhaps by committing murders. No—I think it is by giving yourself to either. But I do not go with people who set experience over against reading as being its opposite.

I went once to see a production of Damaged Goods. A big, deep-bosomed, motherly Jewess sat next to me. She was the kind that breathes out warm easy content like a barrel stove. She was completely overcome by the end of the play.

"My God!" she said with her ample bosom heaving and the tears raining down her cheeks. "Some!—Lesson!"

It was not for her daughter she was afraid, nor her son, nor herself, nor even for all the men and women about her in her comfortable enough world. She had entered into some greater social scene where the faces of men and women are dark and the features of the actors are eternal and bright as mighty nature's.

MADGE JENISON.

Of Riches

When we are rich
we shall build a house upon a hill,
with the eight winds about us,
and the rains,
and the whole sky for our orchard,
with fruits golden and silver,
and a distant river of thunder.

When we are rich
our house on the hill shall be stone,
with a stone hearth, and pine-logs
cracking their fragrance like nuts,
and pewter like moon and stars
and copper like sun
for the fire to play on.

When we are rich
our stone house shall have a room,
wide, and smelling of cedar,
with a couch the color of evening
and soft as flowers to lie on.
And the winds and the rains and the fruits
in the orchard that blow
and the dark and bright of the fire
shall move beyond us like music
while two are silent together.

Now we are poor.
We have no hill and no house.
Our orchard is hidden from us;
even our fire is borrowed . . .
Oh, let no one know
how we count our riches (in silence)—
not even God.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

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Preliminaries of Genoa

THE renewed muddle into which Europe relapsed after the Cannes Conference has been such that at one time it seemed doubtful if the Genoa Conference would take place. The muddle, however, has now been so far resolved that the conference seems safe. The convulsions that have taken place during the last two months have had their origin in the fundamental difficulties which the Genoa Conference has been convened to solve.

I.

RUSSIAN DEBTS AND RUSSIAN TRADE

Experts have been at work since the end of January attempting to hammer out, from the vast material bearing on the problem of trade with Russia, a common basis for tackling the problem at Genoa in a practical way. The experts first of all worked separately in France, Great Britain, Belgium, Italy and Japan, and, at the moment of writing, have assembled in London with a view to co-ordinating their work, and finding common ground.

As an instance of the sort of difficulty which has arisen may be quoted the scheme which was decided on at Cannes for the setting up of an International Corporation with an international capital. The object of it was to enable traders to enter Russia with some sort of confidence. When the resolution was adopted at Cannes it was regarded as important that the capital of £20,000,000 sterling, which it was hoped would be raised, should be raised entirely from private sources in France, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Belgium, and if possible also in the United States, Japan, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, and Czecho-Slovakia, and that the governments of these countries should have no share in the undertaking whatever. The reason for this was that no government could undertake any financial responsibility or guarantee in such a matter except on the condition that it had some share of control in the operations to which it led. Such control on the part of governments would, it was foreseen, lead to the raising of political problems as between the Soviet government and themselves. And the whole importance of the scheme lay in its chance of beginning trade empirically, and leaving its political implications to be settled later on.

The International Corporation was in fact established at a meeting held in London towards the end of February. In a report which was issued after the meeting of the organizers it was declared that "The main object of the corporations will be to examine the opportunities for undertaking work in connection with European reconstruction and to assist in the financing of such undertakings. The policy of the corporations will be to cooperate where possible with other agencies and undertakings, and not to attempt to create any monopoly." It was recommended by the delegates at the meeting that the separate corporations which are established in the various countries should not do business with any country which does not (a) Recognize all public debts and obligations undertaken in the past or to be undertaken by the state as well as the obligation to restore or, in default of restoration, to compensate all foreign interests for loss or damage caused to them when property has been confiscated or withheld; (b) Establish a legal system which sanctions or enforces trade and other contracts with impartiality; (c) Give security for trade.

The next problem, of course, was to raise the money. Here a difficulty at once arose. It was found that, given the difficulties of starting trade with Russia or with some of the new states of Central and Eastern Europe whose frontiers are not yet definitely fixed, it was impossible to raise the necessary capital from private sources except under government guarantees for its security. From the point of view of the private trader the problem of investing money for the purpose of trade with such countries was rather like the lending of money to an unknown person, or underwriting an insurance scheme for admittedly unhealthy people.

The experts, therefore, have found that it is impossible to escape the whole question of guarantees as they affect the security of private traders in Russia. If it is the case that government help is indispensable for the working of the International Corporation, then the first business of the Genoa Conference will be to find out how far the Soviet delegates are prepared to go in order to afford the necessary safeguards.

In case of a dispute, for instance, between a Russian subject of the Soviet government and a foreign trader, is the dispute to be settled in a Bolshevik court of law? Clearly such a proceeding would be begging the question, because the whole difficulty arises out of the clash between Bolshevik economics (if these two words are not mutually destructive) and the economics of capitalism. The question, therefore, has been raised whether it would not be a desirable thing to urge the Soviet representatives at Genoa to agree to the establishment of a system of Capitulations in Russia, under which foreign residents would be entitled to trial before a tribunal of their own nationals. Even so, however, the difficulty would not be fully solved because if there is a fundamental clash between a hypothetical decision of a Bolshevik tribunal and that of an external tribunal under Capitulations, the problem still remains as to how to reconcile the two of them. It would still be necessary that there should be some final jurisdiction equally binding on Russian traders and foreign traders.

In the case of Great Britain and Russia such an issue has in fact arisen. Under the terms of the trading agreement certain goods, namely 109 tons of veneer or plywood, were sold by the Russian Soviet government through Mr. Krassin to an English company. It happened that the goods in question had been confiscated by the Soviet government, and a Russian company, the former owners, decided to claim the goods as theirs. The case came up in the British courts. The decision was that the Russian company, from which the goods had been confiscated by the Soviet government had a legal claim on the goods. It is true that the main obstacle then was that the Soviets were not a government recognized by the British government, and that therefore proprietary rights acquired under the old regime still stood intact so far as British law was concerned. The difference now is that the experts proceed on the assumption that at Genoa the Soviets will be recognized de jure by the powers. Presumably, therefore, the Genoa Conference will have to decide how far the Soviet government is to retain proprietary rights for confiscated concerns while undertaking to indemnify those who have been expropriated.

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Then there arises the vast and complicated question of Russian debts. Assuming, as is generally assumed, that at Genoa the Soviet representatives will accept the principle of the Soviet's liability for the Russian national debt in return for political recognition of the Soviet government as the government of Russia, the question then arises what are debts? There are Russian government debts. There are debts contracted by private Russian individuals to foreigners before the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. There are goods and services which were rendered both to the Russian government and to private Russian firms and individuals up to the time of the Bolshevik revolution, which have not been paid for. There are foreign concerns in Russia which have been commandeered or destroyed by the Bolshevik government, and which have represented not only a capital loss to the foreign owner, but also an interim loss of profits. The question is how far is the Soviet government liable, and what are the principles on which the Soviet liability shall be assessed? It is rightly seen that this question opens up a whole new reparation problem for Europe, a thousand times more difficult and more complicated than ever was that of German reparations.

This question is not new, at any rate to the British experts. During the first half of 1920, when the trading agreement was being negotiated between Great Britain and Russia, this problem was solved in the following way: The Soviet government undertook to recognize its liability to pay compensation to British subjects in respect to goods supplied, or services rendered either to itself or to the former government of Russia, or to Russian citizens, for which payment had not been made owing to the Russian revolution. It was decided, however, that the detailed method of discharging that liability should be reserved for a political Peace Conference between Russia and Great Britain at which the definite political relationship between the two countries should be regulated, and at which all questions relating to the liability of each of the parties towards the other party or its nationals, should at the same time be settled. In the case of Genoa the Russian problem will have to be considered in both its economic and in its political aspects, and therefore it will be necessary for the question of Russian reparations to be tackled all along the line. Added to this is the virtual certainty that when the Soviet representatives appear at Genoa and accept the principle of liability for debts, they will bring forward their own counter claim against the Allied governments for indemnity against the losses incurred by the Bolshevik government as a result of the "White" Russian counter-revolutionary campaigns of Yudenitch, Denikin, Wrangel and the rest, which were supported by the governments of the west, and particularly by the French government. Is this claim to be admitted, and if so on what principle is the liability of the Allies to be assessed? A still more horrible complication has been suggested in certain French quarters, namely that if this claim on the part of the Soviet representatives is to be admitted, then the Allies have a further counter claim to put forward, namely for indemnity for the loss caused to the Allied governments by the Russian defection after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

II.

CASTING BREAD UPON THE WATERS

One of the fundamental principles on which the experts have to form an opinion before the opening of the Genoa Conference is whether the powers in Europe are prepared to take bold risks, or whether they are timorously to insist on guarantees before each step can be taken. It is roughly true that the French experts have been more concerned with the meticulous examination of the sort of guarantees that would be required of the Soviet government before trading relations can be established with any assured prospect of security. The British and Italian experts, on the other hand, have been inclined to say that the best policy is to "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." In Great Britain, at any rate among those who are determined to begin with the least possible delay what must necessarily be a long process of restarting the wheels of European industry, there is a disposition to face the fact that no solid benefits can be hoped for from trade with Russia for many years to come, but the process will have to be started some time, and the later it is postponed the more deferred will be the ultimate benefits. According to the estimate of an Italian expert, Dr. Giannani, there are 300,000,000 men in Europe and Asia who, at the present time, are hardly producing at all. In particular, Russia, Asia Minor, China and the belt of border states from Rumania to Esthonia, have very largely ceased work, and this fact affects the economic prosperity not only of the whole of Europe, but of the world.

There is one striking exception in the east of Europe, namely Czecho-Slovakia. It is a new country, three years old, brought into being by the Peace Treaty. It is surrounded by countries which economically are devastated, and yet it is one of the most prosperous countries in Europe at the present time. This fact is due to the statesmanship and the economic courage of men like the President, Dr. Masaryk, and the Prime Minister, Dr. Benes. Czecho-Slovakia was one of the first countries in Europe to start trading with Russia. The principle on which they have proceeded has been to settle in Russia, to start working, and to expect nothing in return for a long time to come. They are still carrying out this policy, and have left the question of drawing up exact terms to regularize their relations with Russia to be indicated by experience. So far as the work of the Allied experts has proceeded it seems clear that while there is agreement on the central principle of demanding a broad guarantee in the form of a recognition of the Russian national debt and other liability for capital goods and services rendered to Russia up to the time of the Bolshevik revolution, there will be a tendency on the part of the British, Italian, and Little Entente representatives to adventure much in the hope of ultimately winning much.

III.

REPARATIONS

It cannot be denied that the exclusion of the subject of reparations from the purview of the Genoa Conference has its drawbacks. The refusal of the United States government to take any part in the conference, due largely to disappointment at the exclusion of reparations, has come as a great blow. None the less the British government plods stodgily on in its attempt to do whatever lies in its power to reduce chaos to order. In the British view it is not essential that reparations—important as the subject is in its bearing on the general problem of European recovery—should be discussed at Genoa. France insisted on their not being discussed because she regarded the subject as too important, too sacred, for risks. Great Britain

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agreed to its exclusion for the opposite reason that she regarded reparations as not important enough in themselves and as capable of settlement by other means. It would even be better in the British view if reparations were cleared out of the way before the Genoa Conference meets. That is why the British Treasury has evolved a scheme. The Treasury proposes to deal drastically with the problem of reparations and inter-Allied debts as a whole. In their paralyzing effect on trade and the exchanges there is no difference between reparations and debts. Hitherto the position has been that the European Allied powers have spent three years trying to extract an indemnity from Germany. Meanwhile, with the solitary exception of Great Britain, they have made no attempt to meet their own debts.

Even the methods hitherto employed in dealing with Germany in the matter of reparations broke down completely after the Cannes Conference, and a provisional scheme of ten-day payments has been in force pending a "settlement." It has been made clear that there was little prospect of Germany continuing to make these periodical payments for much longer, and the "settlement" steadily receded.

The ironic intervention of the United States a week ago, when she demanded a share of whatever might be got out of Germany, had a swift effect in illuminating the farce in all its nakedness. The farce cannot go on. Therefore the British Treasury, which in the matter of reparations seems all along to have been the sane influence in Europe, has drawn up a scheme. The total of one hundred and thirty-two milliard (132,000,000,000) gold marks solemnly decided on as Germany's total liability less than a year ago in London is, according to the proposal of the British Treasury, to be made to absorb the whole body of inter-Allied debt. Germany is to be asked to shoulder the Allied debts and to accept a contingent liability to discharge them in so far as and when creditor Allies call on debtor Allies for payment. In return her own total liability is to be reduced by the full total of inter-Allied indebtedness.

The Treasury works out the following estimate of the result of such a scheme in round figures. For uniformity the figures are in German gold marks. The May figure of last year was one hundred and thirty-two milliards as the German indemnity. Of this twenty-five milliards should be regarded as non-German reparation; a further sum should be credited to Germany for payments made up to the end of last year. The total German indebtedness at the beginning of the present year should therefore be reduced to exactly one hundred and ten milliards.

Germany is to satisfy sixty-five milliards of this by means of her contingent liability for inter-Allied debts—that is, a liability to pay any principal or interest thereon on demand which any creditor may make on any debtor Ally. Germany is to deposit her obligations under this liability, payable at one month's notice, with the Reparation Commission, and they are to rank as and when notice is given equally with any German government obligations outstanding at the time notice is given.

So far the scheme is plain sailing. It happens, however, that the total of sixty-five milliards of inter-Allied debt is made up on the estimate made by the British Treasury that forty milliards are owed to the United States, twenty milliards to the United Kingdom, and five milliards to France. Russia is left out of account. The success of the scheme thus depends largely upon American participation.

The British Treasury therefore proposes that the United Kingdom and France shall agree not to demand the settlement of any debts owed them by other Allied governments except in so far as (1) they are themselves called on by the United States to pay and (2) that they fail to recover from Germany. The contingent amount of Germany's liability, with a maximum of sixty-five milliards, is thus made to depend indirectly upon the extent to which the United States demands payment from the European Allies.

So far as Great Britain is concerned, the scheme reveals the underlying motive of exacting payment from Germany only so far as Great Britain is called on for payment by the United States. In other words, it is a proposal for the general cancellation of debt with a view to getting on with business.

It is true, on the other hand, that apart from the contingent liability of sixty-five milliards—which in practice is not expected to amount to anything—Germany will still have an effective liability of forty-five milliards. This is vastly different from the May total of last year of one hundred and thirty-two milliards.

Great Britain's main concern in that forty-five milliards is based on the interests of the Dominions and Ireland. The Spa percentages would have to be readjusted for the division of these forty-five milliards among the Allies, but the British share to the extent of about nine-tenths, would go to the Dominions and Ireland.

The forty-five milliards would be "mobilized" (as they say in the Treasury in their search for a word which shall be sufficiently removed from the uncomfortable exactitude of the word "paid") partly by deliveries in kind, partly by means of international loans. A portion of the cash payment, for instance, might be converted into a sterling loan to the British government, which would be able to give effect to its desire for a moratorium by exacting no interest for three years, the interest thereafter to be five per-cent, payable half-yearly. It would be a partial moratorium only in view of the Reparation (Recovery) act, which would collect revenue from the German customs to a greater or smaller extent.

The interminable squabble about the division of the first milliard might be solved by an agreement on the status quo, each Ally to retain what, in fact, it had up to the end of last year. That portion of the effective liability which would be discharged by deliveries in kind might, according to the British Treasury scheme, be handled by means of separate agreements, which might be negotiated on the Wiesbaden plan, the valuations being decided by three representative valuers: one German, one for the recovering Ally, and one appointed by the Reparation Commission. This idea would have the incidental effect of composing the difficulties produced by the sense of grievance which certain Allies have had—unfortunately with reason—against the Franco-German agreement made at Wiesbaden.

IV.

COST OF THE ARMIES ON THE RHINE

When the United States government put in a claim for her share of expenses on account of her armies of occupation, British financial quarters were highly gratified because it had the immediate effect of speeding up the

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general settlement of the reparations muddle. Granted the chaotic muddle which has been produced by the scramble for reparations, an additional complication is all to the good. On the other hand the action of the United States has caused considerable embarrassment in Whitehall. The difficulty is this. The United States clearly has a right to claim indemnity from Germany for the cost of her armies on the Rhine, just as the European Allies have a claim. The Allies, however, are in fact realizing their claim, as far as they can, through a definite channel. That channel is the Treaty of Versailles. The United States is not a party to the Treaty of Versailles. To Great Britain it was a serious blow that the United States failed to ratify the Treaty, sympathetic as were the British people with the motives which actuated the United States. It is, however, the fact. Now the Reparation Commission was set up in virtue of the Treaty of Versailles, and with the limited purpose of carrying out the reparation clauses of the Treaty. Legally, therefore, the United States has no claim on the funds of the Reparation Commission because she is not a party to the Treaty. It appears that if the United States wishes to realize her own claims on Germany her only means of doing so are whatever means she chooses to adopt independently of the European Allies. The United States has made her own separate peace with Germany. It is true that the American armies on the Rhine went there as a result of undertakings made by the United States under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and that while repudiating the Treaty the United States, with characteristic generosity, decided to fulfill obligations to which she was legally no longer bound. Article 235 of the Treaty of Versailles stipulates that "In order to enable the Allied and Associated Powers to proceed at once to the restoration of their industrial and economic life, pending the full determination of their claims, Germany shall pay 20,000,000,000 gold marks. Out of this sum the expenses of the armies of occupation subsequent to the Armistice shall first be met." The difficult question arises whether this specific point in the Treaty, where the United States has fulfilled obligations which she undertook under the Treaty, does not entitle the United States to a share in the indemnity prescribed by the Treaty, even though it was not ratified by the United States? There is no such thing as finality in this world, but so far the view has been taken, not only in British official quarters but in Allied quarters as a whole, that the interests of the United States would be better served, given her dissociation from the Allies, if she dealt direct with Germany.

GEORGE GLASGOW.

THE BANDWAGON

ZERO IN READING MATTER

A request for magazines has gone out from the local Red Cross headquarters, where an effort is being made to secure reading matter for soldiers in the Benning hospital. In asking for the discarded periodicals, the need of something for convalescents to read is emphasized by the Red Cross authorities.

Any kind of magazine is acceptable, it is stated, but those that are illustrated and those containing short stories are preferred. Copies of the New Republic and the No Tobacco Journal are hardly worth fooling with, so far as the soldiers are concerned.—*The Columbus, Georgia, Ledger.*

A SELF MADE NOBLEMAN

Cyril Woodward Chubley Armstrong, self made Chicago lawyer, whose struggle for a living has been only moderately successful, today was informed that he is heir to an English Earldom, but the news had little effect on him, for he calmly informed newspaper reporters that he already possessed the greatest title in the world—that of an American citizen—and desired no other.—*Associated Press despatch to the New York World.*

BRYAN'S ANCESTRAL NAME

"Thank God that we are all free to pick our own ancestors, and for my part I take mud. We all know what mud is. We are indebted to it indirectly for our food, our clothes and the beautiful flowers. When we die we go back to mud."—*From a Brooklyn address by W. J. B.*

IN THEIR DEATH THEY ARE NOT DIVIDED

In the discussion which ensued, Dr. Kunz suggested that the mining companies devote more attention to obtaining suitable cemeteries for their employees as a means for holding them together.—*Engineering and Mining Journal.*

INDIANIMATED PICTURE

Your favorite occupation?
—Meeting the folks from home.
Where would you prefer to live?
—In Sullivan, Indiana.
Your favorite prose author?
—Booth Tarkington.
Your favorite poet?
—James Whitcomb Riley.

—*From Mental Photo of Will H. Hays in the New York American.*

THE DUAL NATURE OF MAN

Your favorite prose author?—Voltaire.
Your particular aversion?—Knockers.

—*From Mental Photo of Richard E. Enright in the New York American.*

TAKES HUSBAND TO HER WEDDING

The popularity of the Princess was evidenced by the immensely hearty reception which she and her husband received as they drove to and from the Abbey.—*The Outlook.*

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VERSE

Ebb-Tide

The sea-path dizzies to the sea
With shimmering gold and glimmering shadow;
The lambs breathe deep and patiently
In the warm meadow:
I will go over the meadow, I will go down to the sea.

The water sags on mellowed rocks,
The sand talks faintly in the caves;
Somewhere the hand of silence knocks
On seagulls' graves:
I will go into the caves, I will go out to the rocks.

The seagulls mew incessantly;
The lambs in slow white circles crop;
The sea-path dizzies to the sea;
The tides drop:
I will come over the meadow, I will come up from the sea.

JOSEPH AUSLANDER.

The Fawn in the Snow

The brown-dappled fawn
Bereft of the doe
Shivers in blue shadow
Of the glaring snow,

His whole world bright
As a jewel, and hard,
Diamond white,
Turquoise barred.

The trees are black,
Their needles gold,
Their boughs crack
In the keen cold.

The brown-dappled fawn
Bereft of the doe
Trembles and shudders
At the bright snow.

The air whets
The warm throat,
The frost frets
At the smooth coat.

Brown agate eyes
Opened round
Agonize
At the cold ground,

At the cold heaven
Enamelled pale,
At the earth shriven
By the snowy gale,

At the magic glitter
Burning to blind,
At beauty bitter
As an almond rind.

Fawn, fawn
Seek for your south,
For flushed dawn
With her warm mouth,

For green sod
With gold and blue
Dappled, as God
Has dappled you,

For slumberous ease,
Firm turf to run
Through fruited trees
Into full sun!

The shivering fawn
Paws at the snow.
South and dawn
Lie below;

Richness and mirth,
Dearth forgiven,
A happy earth,
A warm heaven.

The sleet streams,
The snow flies;
The fawn dreams
With wide brown eyes.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

Statue and Birds

Here, in the withered arbor, like the arrested wind,
Straight sides, carven knees,
Stands the statue, with hands flung out in alarm
Or remonstrances.

Over the lintel sway the woven bracts of the vine
In a pattern of angles.
The quill of the fountains falters; woods rake on the sky
Their brusque tangles.

The birds walk by slowly, circling the marble girl,
The golden quails,
The pheasants, closed up in their arrowy wings,
Dragging their sharp tails.

The inquietudes of the sap and of the blood are spent;
What is forsaken will rest.
But her heel is lifted,—she would flee,—the whistle of the birds
Fails on her breast.

LOUISE BOGAN.

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Rouge et Noir

The Truth about Blayds, by A. A. Milne. The Booth Theatre, March 14, 1922.

Madame Pierre, adapted from Eugène Brieux's comedy, Les Hannetons, by Arthur Hornblow, Jr. The Ritz Theatre, February 15, 1922.

MR. NORMAN-BEL GEDDES has given The Truth about Blayds a remarkable setting, a high drawing-room in varied blues, almost sentimental but based on very solid and dignified architecture. And that is exactly what the life and the people there turn out to be, old Blayds himself especially, who is weak, sentimental but—as they say in the lines—with a quality. In this room the play begins well, a little slowly at the start but full of the promise of that comedy note that English dramatists know how to get, that sense of a rambling and secure philosophy, the flavor and background of a social point-of-view.

Blayds, nearing a hundred now and famous for two generations as a poet, is the centre of the living in this house. Every word of his is set down, the world revolves about him. And now it is this great man's birthday and the younger authors of England have sent to add their tribute to the rest. Then Blayds in his armchair is rolled into the room; and though, as a matter of fact, he is carried from that moment by Mr. Heggie's remarkable performance entirely out of the room and beyond the play, we can see from his lines that he is really a person, a charming, distinguished figure. Most of the tyranny, then, and the air of folly in the house springs from the minds of the others there. What a chance for comedy!

But, alas, at this point Isobel meets Mr. Royce who—conveyed himself by the dry quietude of Mr. Gilbert Emery's acting—has come to convey the salutations of England's younger authors to England's great poet. The two have met before, and Isobel had never wedded him because her father needed her. And now at last they stand face to face again. An ominous silence then, a sacred hush. And British sentiment quietly breaks loose in our midst. Not much at first, just a few reticent and sweetish odds and ends that are only slightly disconcerting. But a moment, however, and we see clearly that the two are on their way. Love knots get into their brains. The hedgerows and the May, the long years, the might-have-beens; from this on Aunt Isobel and Mr. Royce mean to talk drivel, you can see that. The play goes ahead, fine comedy material with delightful contriving. Old Blayds dies, and Isobel comes to tell the family the secret he has told her that last day. The poems were not all his, only that one failure of a volume in '63; they had been left by a friend who had been dead these many years and had willed the poems to Blayds. And here were the laurels; here was the family, distinguished on Blayds' account; here was the son-in-law—whose portrait Mr. Gottschalk does with such exquisite finish and irony—ready to out-Boswell Boswell over his great father-in-law; what a comedy now of evasion, people believing what they want to believe; inexhaustible stores of humor for Mr. Milne, and filled by him with delicious turns and crochets. And yet the while sweets to the sweet. Isobel and her romance will gum up the wheels from this on to the very end. The last word is to be hers. And in the meantime several hundred words are hers right there in the second act; words so bad, so shameless and so maudlin that not even her earlier sweetness has prepared us for them; words that make us squirm for sheer embarrassment and wonder where to look. "I might have had a little girl to be my friend, and we could have had secrets together about my man, our man: we could have had secrets together about his dear, foolish, manlike ways. Ah, how we would have spoilt our man, my little girl and I. He asked me to marry him and I didn't. I sent him away. I said—" and so on and on and on, hands at the sides, penserosa, with the tremolo and the voix céleste always out. And finally, "Ah, how happy we could have made our man, my little girl and I." In the last act it gets worse, for then everything has got to be settled, love needs the whole floor. Mr. Royce stands and plays with the moment. He knows quite well that after a while he will take his hands out of his manlike quiet pockets and fold her to his breast. The woman he has loved is dead and lives now in this daughter, or the daughter lives in her, and both or whichever you like is Isobel now, will she come with him? But how can she? He must be playful. He introduces one woman to the other, he is as analytical as Hiawatha's mittens with the skinside inside outside and the furside outside inside; and he thinks quite seriously that she will be happy perhaps when the primroses are out and the birds are busy.

After that of course all is well. But this is the kind of thing, nevertheless, that teaches us to value the actor's self-control in getting such stuff said and done with. And it illustrates for us the kind of sentimental drivel that thrives in Great Britain! How full of ringlet curls it is, of sashes, and silly affectation! Saccharinity, avoidance of the point, diffused sex, and unordered intelligence! No wonder Continentals are puzzled by the London stage, by this willingness to falsify, to slip and slop inanities, to welter in treacle. I remember some of those nobly cynical and distinguished brains in London. What do they think of this? But whatever they may think, they have little to say about it. How much, I wonder, do they really mind? If a man's wife calls him Prince Charming twice in public, whose fault must it be?

On the other hand at the Ritz there was Madame Pierre, with Miss Estelle Winwood bringing to her part an astonishing flexibility and technical facility, a secure and careless sincerity, and an effect of wit that shot the rôle beyond Brieux himself very likely. And Mr. Roland Young, with the same wit and intelligence, technique and security, an encouragement to watch. In this play the professor, somewhere around forty, has a friend living with him, a little rapscallion who is a perpetual nuisance to him but without whom he is unable to exist. She cares nothing for his ferns. He cares less for her former friends. And so they fight it out, every day a battle. But they love each other nevertheless. It is always more and more difficult; Charlotte has nothing to do and nobody to see. Pierre is sick of her humors and her rows. Finally a grand upheaval about ferns, excursions and infidelity—Charlotte has been false to Pierre with an old friend of his, not because she loved the man but because he was so amusing, he could make a noise like a locomotive — and Charlotte departs. In the third act she pretends to drown herself; and Pierre, though he has rejoiced in his freedom, takes her back.

Madame Pierre was soon over; and for two reasons, I think. First, the last act was tedious more or less and uninventive, with Pierre boasting about and all of us knowing that Charlotte would return. The foreignness of the French mind was the other reason for the failure.

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Here were two people proving what Flaubert said, that adultery has all the platitudes of marriage. And here the French point-of-view was saying that after all this is life; these two people have to take their medicine. They will exasperate each other with their ways they will torment each other with their mutual passion, till everything is balanced up, everything paid. Life will burlesque them in the end; they have already their scatter-brained and plaintive little tragedy. Mais non, alors, par exemple, what more can we ask?

I am afraid we ask a good deal more.

There was a picture in Punch once in which, in the midst of a naval engagement, smoke, unendurable heat, two stokers come up on deck for a breath of air, stripped to the waist; one says to the other, "Well, I think he ought 'o married her." So there we are; who is going to settle this business? Charlotte will suffer of course, for she is a pathetic little sketch with her powers of love and boredom. But when? How would it have been to have them secretly married all this time? Or to let her drown? Or repent and settle down and love the country, the ducks and Pierre's children? But Brieux never even so much as bothers himself to say that the poor child had never really had a chance. At this rate how will things wind up and wind up here now? Brieux and Miss Winwood and Mr. Young seem to have the idea that we might enjoy merely the sense of wit, of observation and dexterity, of the pitiful grotesque. No. Paris may be, as Lucian said of Rome, a school for the resistance of temptation; but on one point in the theatre we stand firm: a thoughtful tragedy may be one thing, but at least we shall not be tempted to use our brains for amusement; let Paris turn thinking into a pleasure if it likes; for us it shall be sacred.

And so this play is withdrawn, and Pierre has his trouble left on his hands, as he no doubt deserves for living in Paris. How different from the home life of Aunt Isobel and Mr. Royce! They stand there at the last side by side, neat, contained and tender, introducing each other to the woman he once loved in her now and the woman he loves in her then, and won't one of them at least be his wife? And yes indeed, both of them will, if she may only say some more of those sad things; which he permits, though he gets rather the best of it, when he hits on the idea of the primroses and the busy little birds.

For this kind of thing there is nothing to do but to go back to your stateroom and lie down and close your eyes. But what is it, you may ask yourself, that makes Mr. Milne willing to spoil good comedy with such drivel as this? And what is it, what set of concessions, what clicks in the mind, what deep power in the theatre so shameful to exploit thus, what is it that makes intelligent people accept stuff in the theatre that they would not tolerate for a moment in a book or in a friend?

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Letter from Ray Stannard Baker

SIR: I have just read in your issue of March 29th your editorial (and Mr. Lippmann's letter) commenting on my chapter in the New York Times of February 26th (not 28th) relating to Mr. Wilson's knowledge of the secret treaties before his arrival in Paris.

I agree with you fully as to the importance of this subject and that it "demands honest and careful consideration." I have spent a good deal of hard work on the original documents, examining the evidence in this matter, and I have endeavored, in the chapter referred to, to put down, as candidly as I could, what my findings were.

There are only two possible positions to be taken as to the President's knowledge of the secret treaties:

1. That he lied when he said to the Senate Committee that "the whole series of understandings" were disclosed to him for the first time when he reached Paris.

2. That he was, as he says, ignorant of them.

The entire implication of the New Republic in its editorial is that the first is correct: in short, that the President lied. I have arrived, from a considerable study of the matter, at the conclusion that the second is true: that he was ignorant of them. The long passage of explanation from my chapter quoted in your editorial comes as near as I can attain to accounting for this state of affairs. Admitting that the President knew of and detested the general practices of the old diplomacy, even that he may have heard in a general way of these particular agreements, I stand by the conclusion which the New Republic saw fit to italicize—"He never, until he reached Paris, enough appreciated the critical importance of these old entanglements to impel him to make a study of them or really know about them."

I base my conclusion first upon the positive evidence of President Wilson's statement, which I confess weighs heavily with me. In the course of a pretty intimate contact with the President during many months at Paris, under most difficult conditions, where he was tested and tried in the fire of the greatest crisis, I can say honestly that I came to have for him the profoundest respect not merely as a truth-teller but as an aggressive truth-teller. And certainly, among all the multitudinous charges brought against the President in America, this of deliberate prevarication, I feel sure you will admit, has not been conspicuous.

But beyond this positive evidence I have a mass of negative evidence, which I have been at much pains to test out. Some of this evidence I set forth in the chapter you mention: but some of it which weighed heavily with me you do not quote. This is it:

"The profoundly important fact is that, among all the papers Mr. Wilson has so carefully preserved, there is no document giving any definite information concerning the secret treaties."

The text upon which you base your editorial is Mr. Lippmann's letter. With two of the three propositions of this letter—that Colonel House knew of these documents, and that Secretary Lansing also knew of one of them, at least—I not only agree, but have set the facts forth even more fully in my chapter than Mr. Lippmann does: but these do not prove that the President knew. There is the best evidence that Colonel House minimized the importance of the treaties at the time. He brushed aside Mr. Balfour's explanations, for he wished to do nothing that would interfere with Allied unity. This seems to have been also the attitude of the great part of the American press and the American people so far as any notice at all was taken of the secret treaties. The public mind was upon the war, and anything that might disturb with doubts the complete unity of the Allies was impatiently regarded. And I believe also, as I said in my chapter, that this ignorance and impatience was shared by most of our diplomatic service.

As to Mr. Lippmann's second premise, that "certain of these (the fourteen) points . . . are unintelligible without reference to the secret treaty between France and Russia," I have before me as I write the original memorandum of the Inquiry (in the preparation of which Mr. Lippmann himself had a part) which the President used in formulating the Fourteen Points. It contains the President's own notations on the margins. Neither this, nor any other memorandum from the Inquiry, or from Colonel

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House, or from Secretary Lansing—or from anyone else that I have been able to find—contains any description of these secret treaties. This report of the Inquiry refers to "ambitions" and desires which were well enough known without any such description. It is not correct, as Mr. Lippmann asserts, that the points are "unintelligible" without reference to these old treaties. They are intelligible as the expression of principles of justice as opposed to the public views of chauvinistic writers and orators among the Allies. That the experts based their recommendations in part upon a knowledge of these treaties does not prove that they communicated their basic knowledge to the President along with their conclusions. In fact, from a close examination of their report, which is framed rather as "a program for a diplomatic offensive" against the Central Powers than with any idea of imposing checks on the Allies, one is unable to perceive the slightest evidence that its compilers even knew (although we know they did know) that there were such things as diplomatic commitments among the latter. The President simply adopted their conclusions in preparing certain of his Fourteen Points as justified by the facts.

Mr. Lippmann's letter thus adds nothing material to the facts advanced in my chapter. Indeed, the New Republic goes to the chapter itself for most of the points upon which it hangs its reasoning. I really endeavored in this chapter to set down all the facts I had. I have been informed, since publication, of one fact I did not know before, being at that time absent in Europe, that certain of the treaties were published in the New York Evening Post after they appeared in the Manchester Guardian. I shall add that fact in the revision for the book.

For these reasons, and incredible as the New Republic finds Wilson's ignorance, I believe the facts point to the conclusion that it was ignorance, however inexcusable, rather than duplicity, and that he told the truth to the Senate Committee.

RAY STANNARD BAKER.

Amherst, Massachusetts.

The Churches and Civil Liberty

SIR: Without in any sense desiring to enter upon the merits of your general discussion with the Federal Council of Churches concerning the attitude of the Protestant churches during the war, there is one phase of the subject which seems to me to require a little attention which it has not yet received. I refer to the attitude of the churches toward relatively simple questions of civil liberty and ordinary humanity. With no desire to single out the Federal Council of Churches (whose work in certain lines I have heartily admired) for especial criticism, I am obliged sorrowfully to record the following facts:

1. Conscientious objectors and political prisoners have repeatedly told me that they have found army and prison chaplains more intolerant and arrogant in spirit than ordinary officials. I personally can testify that I have found high ecclesiastics, some of them connected with an informal committee of the Federal Council of Churches, harder to deal with than the officials of the War Department. I remember one occasion when some of these gentlemen not only refused altogether to see any reason for conscientious objection (in spite of their resolutions of the Federal Council calling upon Christians to "protect the rights of conscience"), but were also quite indifferent to the shocking and well established stories of mistreatment of conscientious objectors and other political prisoners then in custody.

2. No church paper, no popular preacher, no group of churchmen, but the New York World was the first powerful voice to call attention to the ill-treatment of conscientious objectors (most of whom were religious objectors) in Fort Leavenworth. Since the Armistice leadership in the return to sanity has been in the hands of liberals who were not primarily churchmen. Not until May, 1919, did the Federal Council of Churches adopt a lukewarm resolution in favor of amnesty for prisoners of conscience to go into effect when peace was declared, but it has never devoted to pushing that resolution a tithe of the energy it has used in other less significant causes. Even so, the Federal Council probably was in advance of the official sentiment of the churches for it is a fact that no official body of any important Protestant church, so far as I have been able to learn, has adopted resolutions in favor of amnesty. In several cases such resolutions have been decisively defeated by ecclesiastical bodies.

3. I am aware that a group of clergymen, some of them of high standing in Protestant denominations, have taken an attitude in advance of that which I have indicated. But their attitude, unfortunately, was no more typical of the churches in general than was the attitude of the twelve lawyers who signed a protest against Attorney General Palmer's lawless raids typical of the bar associations of the United States.

In short not only has the church been unable to afford leadership in the great and complex ethical questions of the war, the peace, and the economic situation, but in the relatively simple matter of mercy and justice toward prisoners of conscience it has utterly failed. The best comment I have seen on the general condition within the churches is found in a recent editorial in the Christian Century:

> The present situation which affords us a set of radical resolutions to show to radicals while the defenders of the existing order of things are satisfied with the complacency of the church amid crying evils is as intolerable as it is disingenuous.

NORMAN THOMAS.

New York City.

Who Willed the War?

SIR: In enumerating, on page 65 of your issue of March 15th, those who "willed the war," you do yourselves an injustice in omitting the New Republic. I remember an editorial in which, soon after the United States entered the war, the New Republic proudly claimed a determining share in that event for the intellectuals; only modesty, it was evident, withheld the editors from naming themselves and their journal.

It is possible that the men who then determined the policy of the New Republic are less proud than they were four years ago of their share in bringing the United States into the war. It is possible that the present direction, not being precisely the same, never was so proud of it. It is possible that both are proud of it still. In any case, I am sure many of your readers would be interested in a frank statement of your present attitude toward the events of those days.

New York. CHARLES E. EDGERTON.

[The New Republic is not aware of any change in its direction that could have affected its attitude toward the question whether the United States should have entered the war or not. We did not "will the war"; the war was on, whatever our will in the matter; and the sole question open was whether it should be carried to its conclusion without the intervention of the United States or with it. Was it possible for us to remain neutral, with honor? The New Republic did not believe then that it was. It does not now believe that it was possible.

For the outcome of the war was not a matter of indifference to the United States. German victory would have meant the establishment in Central Europe of the greatest military power of the ages, dominant from the narrowed frontiers of France to the Urals, from the Baltic to the Adriatic and Aegean. Could the peoples of Central Europe have shaken off such a military power? Not for generations, if it had been crowned with success in this war. This conclusion is not based on any childish view that German militarists are any more arrogant or ruthless than French, British or American militarists would be, in the same circumstances. It is based on geography. Victorious Germany could have ruled Europe. Victorious France cannot, in the long run. For Germany is the heart of Europe, France only a member.

For a time there appeared to be a way out: a peace by negotiation, without victors or vanquished. The New Republic supported every step taken by President Wilson to bring about such a settlement. But when the resumption by Germany of unlimited submarine warfare shut off every hope of a settlement except by the defeat of one side or the other, there was, we believed and still believe, no honorable course for America to pursue except to range herself on the side of the Allies.

The peace settlement, it is superfluous to say, was bitterly disappointing to the New Republic. It was not the kind of settlement that President Wilson promised when he carried the country with him into the war. A better peace lay within the

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range of possibility at that time. It was lost because President Wilson, instead of forcing the repudiation of the Secret Treaties, postponed all consideration of the settlement until the war should have been won. But abominable as the settlement proved to be, we believe that it was far less dangerous to the civilization of Europe than the settlement that would have followed a German victory. Little by little the public opinion of the world is forcing revision of the existing treaties. Public opinion would have beaten in vain against the dispositions of a victorious Germany.

The war was the greatest blunder and crime of modern times. It wrought infinite mischief and infinitesimal good. American participation, however, was neither a blunder nor a crime, as we see it, but the choice of the lesser evil, in itself a colossal one. If we are responsible for the Great War, in any real sense, that responsibility rests upon our conduct as individuals, before 1914 and before the founding of the New Republic. Did we do our part toward keeping the American public aware of the grave dangers of a European war, a danger most intellectuals perceived certainly as early as the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908? Did we throw ourselves with missionary zeal into the world peace movement, which offered at least a feeble chance of preventing the disaster? Or did we shrink from boring people with reiterated warnings of the impending danger? Whatever we did or omitted to do, we judge that we deserve the punishment meted out to us by the income tax laws. And we shall deserve heavier punishment if fear of boring our readers with warnings of danger to come prevents us from agitating, in season and out, for justice and understanding and mutual aid among nations.—THE EDITORS.]

The Voice of the People

SIR: Will you inform the readers of the New Republic that the Central Committee on Organizing Public Opinion, at 32 Court St., Brooklyn, Room 704, is ready to cooperate with any society or individual who desires to see the successful accomplishment of any neighborhood or local complaint, improvement or issue.

This Committee claims that any reasonable neighborhood or local complaint or improvement having public sentiment behind it can be attended to successfully within a reasonable time by the moral persuasion of public opinion provided the right method has been applied after mere protest or bureaucratic, legal or legislative action have failed to accomplish the desired result.

There is no charge for consulting with our office any weekday between the hours of 9 A. M. and 5 P. M.

WILLIAM KEATING,
Secretary.

Brooklyn.

Why China Entered the World War

SIR: I should not give any attention to a review of various books written in an evidently disgruntled and sneering mood by C. A. Beard, unless he had touched upon a matter concerning which I should much dislike to see any misunderstanding fostered under the protection of the New Republic. I refer to the incident of China's breaking off diplomatic relations with Germany. As to the criticism of my action in carrying out the policy of the government I am little concerned because I hardly believe that the reviewer himself, notwithstanding his superior detachment from national bias, would in the particular case have told the Chinese that it was a matter of great doubt whether they should accept the invitation of America. Your reviewer, however, failed to gather that the appeal to the Chinese government was made on the plane of public policy, considering the best interests of all concerned, and that it was so accepted by the Chinese without any hint of coercion, undue influence, barter, or special advantage.

In failing to see that such an appeal, freely seconded of their own record by all who had an opinion, made without intrigue or secrecy, by merely arguing the general wisdom of a course of action, and making or exacting no assurances except the self-evident one of fair treatment, is a thing different from the haggle and barter of secret diplomacy, the reviewer betrays a characteristic sometimes encountered in home-staying landlubbers, in that they readily abuse their country and its officials for action which a superficial knowledge pictures to them as resembling that which we have criticized in others. Because I mentioned Mr. Blythe, your reviewer mixes me up in Mr. Blythe's picturesque account, written with a natural desire to give international affairs some of the verve of football tactics.

But the crux, I repeat, lies in the nature of the action, which hitherto only German critics had questioned, and which was devoid of anything not strictly compatible with a reasonable proposal discussed and accepted on its merits, as a matter of public interest. To the credit of China it should be remembered that in her associating herself with us in the great war there was nothing sordid, and profit-seeking, but that it was a liberating, broadminded policy.

Your reviewer speaks of that part of my record which I "see fit to publish." While the original record dictated by me was about three times as long as that published, the selection which reduced the volume was made by others than myself, carrying out the suggestion of the publishers as to what would be of more general public interest, and in no matter whatsoever implying a self-imposed censorship.

PAUL S. REINSCH.

Washington.

SIR: I have no desire to enter into an exchange of epithets with Mr. Reinsch. I merely ask any curious reader, before rendering judgment, to compare the two accounts of how China was brought into the war, both of them by Mr. Reinsch.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

New York City.

Requirements for the Bar

SIR: I have just finished reading the editorial in your magazine entitled The Public Profession of the Law, in which the New Republic, with all its democracy of spirit, somewhat surprisingly aligns itself with the growing demand for a stricter compulsory educational test for members of the bar. It is coming, alas, but one who feels the absolute justification for the faith that is in her, as I do, should not let the opportunity go by for expression of the reasons against it.

Before proceeding further, let me say that I am among the old-fashioned ones who honestly believe that the law is the most learned profession in the world, with a code of ethics second to none, which is more widely observed and lived up to than the code of any other profession. I say this after thirty-five years of close association with law and lawyers, among whom I have found the highest and finest among a very wide and very mixed acquaintance with men.

It happens that five of the most eminent lawyers of my home city, during these many years, were entirely office bred. Among them were the Honorable Walter I. Smith, but recently deceased, judge of the United States Court of Appeals, and the late John N. Baldwin, general solicitor for the Union Pacific Railway system at the time of his death. Both of these men were blessed with a short college experience, numbered by weeks. The other three never had a day's education outside of the Council Bluffs high school, of which all five were graduates; but their names are known throughout two states, and further, as among the keenest—yes, and the most learned—in their profession in those two states. It is, of course, accidental that among the college and university educated men practising in the same locality at the same time, not more than one or two could approach them in ability; accidental, of course, for, eminent as they were, able as they were, all would have been the better for the college training, and none recognized this more keenly than themselves.

But college was out of the question for four of these five boys, as it is still out of the question, always will be out of the question for a large proportion of American youth of abilities as great as theirs. Easier is it, of course, with a college of sorts in every congressional district; but in estimating the ease with which an education may be obtained, one tremendous factor of American life is usually overlooked—the hideous, undeniable, unavoidable fact that in a very large proportion of cases the ambitious boy who hungers and thirsts for an education and a

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chance to use the brain which he so well knows is a good one, has not only himself to look out for, but others more or less dependent on him. For the devoted son and loyal brother whose ambitions are bounded only by his responsibilities is not wholly a creation of fiction.

And after all, what is the object of educational requirements of any kind as a prerequisite for admission to a profession? Is it not that the work for which the student is preparing himself may be done well? Certainly. Therefore, the only requirement which we have a right to demand is that the applicant shall have sufficient education to enable him to do the work of his profession properly. This, I happen to know, is entirely possible in the law with no college preparation at all, professional or otherwise. The usual answer to that statement (for this controversy is not new to me) is that the legal practice of today is a very much more complicated matter than the legal practice of a quarter century ago, and the preliminary requirements therefore much more exacting. As a basis for the next answer, I say that the men to whom I have referred have found no difficulty in keeping up with the demands of the present day, and the answer comes promptly: It is said that these men have grown into the more complicated practice gradually, preparing for it in the work itself. Exactly. And in the profession it must always be so. Put a young man through any college, then put him through the legal department of Harvard or Columbia, but still he must grow up to the exigencies of complicated modern practice through a less complicated practice. Doubtless with such a preparation few youngsters with an entirely theoretical and no practical knowledge of the law (such as was gained by their more humbly prepared predecessors in office and court room) would hesitate to tackle the knottiest constitutional problem, but he will not have the opportunity. His client or the old curmudgeon of a lawyer who has secured his valuable services at a mere pittance per month will see to that. Nevertheless, he is better off to have secured the preparation and he will reach the top rounds sooner, no doubt, than his less fortunate brother of equal ability but less elaborate preparation. The point is, have we any right to blight the ambitions of the less fortunate because his success must be of slower growth? He will not imperil the important cause too big for him to handle, because clients with great cases are good pickers, and such a case will not come to him until he is big enough to take care of it. Give him the natural ability, and he will grow to it.

But if he has not the ability? Sir, if he has not the far-famed "legal mind" no amount of preparation can give it to him, and his college course will make him only less a failure than he would be without it.

And right here is the point of the argument: There is a very sure and perfect method of weeding out the undesirables, the unfit collegian as well as the mistaken high school boy whose ambitions have overshot his abilities. Stiffen up the examinations. Make them as rigid as the most exacting can require, mark them closely and admit to the sacred precincts of the bar only those who have met the test, regardless of the method of their preparation. Let these final examinations be conducted at certain set times by or under the supervision of the highest appellate court in the state, whether the candidate be an office boy or a Columbia graduate; let them extend over a week if need be; give to the would-be lawyer a hypothetical case as complicated and obscure as anything he will be likely to be called upon to try in the first ten years, then let him argue it on principle, without access to books; give him another one and turn him loose in a law library to prepare a brief upon it from the books; mark the papers as much on ability to reason as on purely accurate statement—for law is or should be almost pure reason. Pass the boy with the stuff in him, turn down without fear or favor that one who can never succeed, without regard to the manner of education, in the one case or the other.

It was once my privilege to attend such a state examination. Of a class of fifty, the two attaining the highest markings were a barber and a law stenographer. The former, with a standing of 93¾ percent, displayed a brilliancy which excited the admiring comment of every lawyer present; but he had a wife who feared to give up the small certainty of his daily wage for the uncertain chance of bigger things, and he is still drawing a razor across the face of successful attorneys with minds less able than his own. As for the stenographer, well, she was a woman, took herself no more seriously than did those about her, and never made any attempt to practise the profession in which she attained a standing of 93½ percent—one quarter of one percent less than that of the man who outclassed her. Only one other member of the class attained a standing above 90 percent, though university men were there. A year or two before, the leader of the class was a woman who, caring for her two babies at home, and attending scarcely any of the lectures, kept pace with her husband's university work by fireside study and far outdistanced him in the state examination.

Across the river from me as I write, in the city of Omaha, is a small educational institution called Creighton University. It has a law department, with perhaps twenty-five or thirty candidates for graduation every year. With a final examination, like all the preliminary ones, noted for its severity, it graduates from eight to ten glad and proud young men who know the Creighton diploma means something, whether the outside world knows it or not. Not a thousand miles away is a state university with many hundreds of students. Its law class numbers several times as many as little Creighton's, and the great majority of its members get their sheepskins. The school is sought very largely by young men of mediocre ability, men who have not succeeded in Creighton and other more particular law schools. Creighton's plan may be followed equally as well in the strictly state examination, securing the survival of the fittest in a legal world which needs the best.

For there is something of truth in the New Republic's charge. To a greater degree than should be possible, the profession has been debauched by the money power. Whenever it becomes as directly beneficial to that power, the medical profession, the ministry, engineering, will be debauched in the same way. The New Republic will be the last to deny that the newspaper and magazine world has been so debauched, that the church and the school have been to some extent invaded. If other professions have not, it is only because capital has not seen its way clear as yet to use them as it has used these others.

The New Republic says, "The democratic principle . . . demands access to all the offices of state by all who are capable of filling them, irrespective of artificial class distinction." This is true, and there are limits within which "taught law" is as much an artificial distinction now as it was in the days of Abraham Lincoln, and to suppress one possible Lincoln were as disastrous now as in the days when he and he alone could rise to the country's dire need of him.

HATTIE T. HARL.

Council Bluffs, Iowa.

[With much that Miss Harl says, the New Republic finds itself in hearty accord. "To put the legal house in order"—the phrase is Senator Root's—requires much more than to render entrance into it more difficult. Intellectual mastery, we have urged, in nowise insures the social serviceability of the legal profession. On the contrary, the more intellectually equipped, the more dangerous is the bar to the healthy development of American democracy so long as its leaders are merely serviceable instruments of selfish interests and the bulk of the bar and the bench exponents of an obsolete philosophy of "freedom." Different social ideals and a different social conception of law must galvanize the legal profession if the processes of law are to prevail in the generation ahead of us.

But no less true is it that intellectual training and education are a prerequisite, and in increasing measure will be, for a legal profession adequate for the tasks which it should fulfill. Whether we like it or not, the office-bred lawyer, certainly for the cities of this country, is a thing of the past, as much so as the conditions which originally produced him. Our lawyers, as much as our doctors, will be products of the professional schools, and the question is as to the requisite pre-professional training. For Miss Harl to deny the great change in conditions confronting the bar today compared with that of thirty or forty years ago is simply to deny facts. For one thing, law is a bookish profession and it is bound to become more so. As Professor Williston, of the Harvard Law School, pointed out at the recent Washington Conference, "the printed sources of Anglo-American law have more than doubled in bulk in thirty or forty years. There are more law reports in English printed since 1885 than were printed prior to that year since the beginning of English law reporting. The bulk of statutes moreover is enormous. No lawyer can be efficient now who has not some ability to use books and extract from them quickly and accurately the principles which they state."

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But this is not all. "Law" is not all contained in law books. The raw material must be sought in the growingly vast records of the social sciences. Whether we like it or not, life and business are becoming increasingly complicated. A knowledge of the lessons of the past, and comparative studies of present-day problems and the manner of dealing with them the world over are essential to make one an effective lawyer. As a result, the profession of the law demands increasing intellectual discipline, scientific disinterestedness and judgment, to enable one to find one's way through the woods, and not to miss the woods for the trees.

Powerful interests do not suffer from an ill-trained bar, but the interests of the community do. Decisions adverse to social legislation and to labor are, of course, not attributable to the inadequacy of lawyers representing these causes. But it is a fact that these causes are too often represented by lawyers whose intellectual equipment falls far short of their requirements.

The New Republic has no illusions about the present run of our colleges. To a large degree they fail in the training, and above all, in the inculcation of intellectual disinterestedness, to which they are dedicated. In supporting a movement for requisite pre-professional training for lawyers, we assume the colleges as they ought to be made to be, and as we are hopeful they are in the process of becoming. But if collegiate training does not, in the main, make for a better trained and more responsible bar, we had better confess our error and shut all our institutions for higher education. If our state universities do not help toward producing more socially desirable doctors, lawyers, engineers and businessmen, they have no excuse for being. If the ideals that now dominate our colleges frustrate their purposes, we should take our ideals in hand, but not surrender our faith in the power of or the necessity for higher education. That collegiate training in facts adds to professional capacity is not merely a theoretic argument. A concrete demonstration is furnished by the Harvard Law School. Its figures for five years preceding the adoption of collegiate training as a requisite for admission, show, to a striking degree, the uniform superiority of college graduates to non-graduates.

We agree with the English Labor party in seeking to broaden the base of higher education rather than to narrow the requirements for professional work. In other words, opportunities to higher education must be made economically possible for all who are capable of it. This means that in a democracy we cannot disassociate the problem of higher education from the fundamental problem of so ordering the social and economic life of our country as to bring higher education within the reach of all youth fit for its discipline. We must deal with general conditions and not with the exceptional case. The argument of Miss Harl is the familiar argument of over-emphasizing the individual instance. And the Lincoln argument is surely overworked. A democracy must shape its institutional life with reference to the great body of its citizens and not base it upon the unaccountable emergence of the extraordinary person. A Lincoln arises, we know not how nor when. A Lincoln is not responsive to any rule of social science, and no rule must be based upon him. It is as irrelevant to formulate our standards for legal education upon Lincoln's career as it is to base our economic order upon it. Tory moralists are fond of pointing to Lincoln as an illustration that a man "who has the stuff in him" will rise no matter how poor. A democracy cannot afford to base its social life and standards either upon the emergence of unwonted genius, or the power to triumph over unfair handicaps.—THE EDITORS.]

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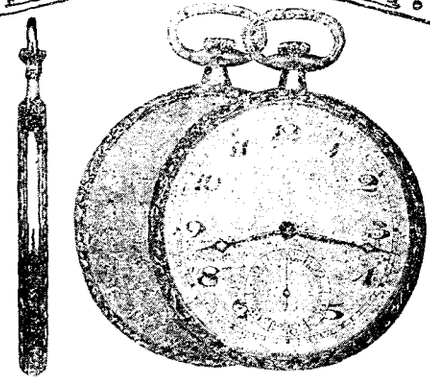

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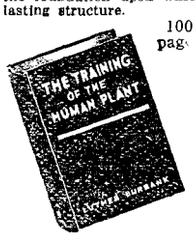

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The New
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Spring Literary Supplement

The Novel of Tomorrow

The Craft of Fiction

The Craft of Fiction, by Percy Lubbock. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.00.

GOOD as Mr. Percy Lubbock is when you take him sentence by sentence, he is better page by page, better still chapter by chapter, and at his best in The Craft of Fiction as a whole. Quotations may be found almost anywhere which give you a taste of his quality, which easily prove him to be a man of imagination and taste. But not by quotation can any adequate notion be given of his originality. For he has done something new under the sun, and the only way to appreciate his newness is to watch him at work, to follow his process as he applies it again and again, to this masterpiece and to that, leaving nothing as it was before he turned on his searchlight.

Summary is perhaps a safer mode of trying to review his book, yet by summary it suffers injustice of another kind. I may say, for example, that Mr. Lubbock looks away from the material which experience and imagination and attention put into Tolstoy's hands, and looks hard at Tolstoy's treatment of all this material, that he follows the same method with Balzac and Dickens and Thackeray, with Flaubert, Meredith and Henry James. Such a statement is accurate enough, yet it gives no idea of what Mr. Lubbock has done. It suggests a picking to pieces, an inventory of things mounted on slides. It is a suggestio falsi, for Mr. Lubbock's way of taking a novel apart is a way of making it live again as a whole, and with an intensity and in a form which we were quite unable to see and to feel for ourselves.

Yet what can one do with Mr. Lubbock beyond summarizing and quoting him? No other instrument is at hand—except gratitude, and gratitude is seldom descriptive—for measuring the proportions of his book.

"In all our talk about novels," Mr. Lubbock says, "we are hampered and held up by our unfamiliarity with what is called their technical aspect, and that is consequently the aspect to confront. That Jane Austen was an acute observer, that Dickens was a great humorist, that George Eliot had a deep knowledge of provincial character, that our living romancers are so full of life that they are neither to hold nor to bind—we know, we have repeated, we have told each other a thousand times; it is no wonder if attention flags when we hear it all again. It is their books, as well as their talents and attainments, that we aspire to see—their books, which we must recreate for ourselves if we are ever to behold them. And in order to recreate them durably there is the one obvious way—to study the craft, to follow the process, to read constructively. The practice of this method appears to me at this time of day, I confess, the only interest of the criticism of fiction. It seems vain to expect that discourse upon novelists will contain anything new for us until we have really and clearly and accurately seen their books."

Mr. Lubbock's way of trying to see a novel is to discriminate the various substances of which it is composed, the different forms of narrative that its author uses. A few of these are the dramatic scene directly given, the generalized picture, the author's own information supplied by himself, the past as some character in the story sees it when he looks back, autobiographies each after its kind, the dramatized mind of some spectator. While a novelist is using one of these, or changing from one to another, Mr. Lubbock goes along with him, trying to see the value and the reason of his changes and choices, even when he made them unconsciously, and showing how they help or hinder the full expression of his subject. And this Mr. Lubbock does without any aesthetic parti pris. He does not deal in abstractions. He acknowledges no universally applicable laws. For him every great novel makes its own laws, whether it keeps or breaks them. "Is this proceeding of the author the right one," he asks, "the best for the subject? Is it possible to conceive and to name a better?" But the conception of a better comes to him from the heart of the book itself. He has not been brought up, neither does he teach, in any one school.

Readers of Henry James's letters, published two years ago, will naturally expect Mr. Lubbock, their editor, to be particularly good on the craft of Henry James's fiction. And good is what Mr. Lubbock is, extraordinarily subtle and illuminating. "The world of silent thought is thrown open," he says of The Ambassadors, "and instead of telling

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the reader what happened there, the novelist uses the look and behavior of thought as the vehicle by which the story is rendered. Just as the writer of a play embodies his subject in visible action and audible speech, so the novelist, dealing with a situation like Strether's, represents it by means of the movement that flickers over the surface of his mind. The impulses and reactions of his mood are the players upon the new scene. In drama of the theatre a character must bear his part unaided; if he is required to be a desperate man, harboring thoughts of crime, he cannot look to the author to appear at the side of the stage and inform the audience of the fact; he must express it himself through his words and deeds, his looks and tones. The playwright so arranges the matter that those will be enough, the spectator will make the right inference. But suppose that instead of a man upon the stage, concealing and betraying his thought, we watch the thought itself, the hidden thing, as it twists to and fro in his brain—watch it without any other aid to understanding but such as its own manner of bearing may supply. The novelist, more free than the playwright could of course *tell* us, if he chose, what lurks behind this agitated spirit, he could step forward and explain the restless appearance of the man's thought. But if he prefers the dramatic way, admittedly the more effective, there is nothing to prevent him from taking it. The man's thought, in its turn, can be made to reveal its own inwardness."

Mr. Lubbock follows the contours of this method through The Ambassadors, lighting the book up, making one see it as never before. How many of its most attentive readers, I wonder, had noticed this until Mr. Lubbock revealed it? —"But though in The Ambassadors the point of view is primarily Strether's, and though it *appears* to be his throughout the book, there is, in fact, an insidious shifting of it, so artfully contrived that the reader may arrive at the end without suspecting the trick. The reader, all unawares, is placed in a better position for an understanding of Strether's history, better than the position of Strether himself." To my surprise I find myself as unwilling to go on, as unwilling to quote Mr. Lubbock's explanation of how this "insidious shifting" is accomplished, as I should be to give away the key to a mystery story. I will content myself with saying that Mr. Lubbock is equally keen-sighted when he deals with Tolstoy or Balzac or Dickens or Flaubert, that he brings us close to the art of each, shows us some of their books in the very act of growth.

Mr. Lubbock himself does not agree. Really and clearly and accurately to see their books? "After all it is impossible—that is certain; the book vanishes as we lay hands on it. Every word we say of it, every phrase I have used about a novel in these pages, is loose, approximate, a little more or a little less than the truth." Well, there is one book about which I find no difficulty in saying neither more nor less than the truth. As a child I can recall the first time I saw, by the help of microscope and screen, the sap moving in a leaf. The Craft of Fiction has given me a sensation of the same kind, that of seeing life going on where I had known it was without being able to see it. Mr. Lubbock would be about the best man in the world, I should think, to give a course on novels in some college or other. His methods have a value quite independent of one's agreement with him in here-and-there opinions. He could teach our youngest novelists what questions to ask themselves before setting to work.

PHILIP LITTELL.

Apollyon *vs.* Pollyanna

THE scope of fiction? Why "scope?" The word implies breadth of choice and treatment, and that in an art already dangerously subversive of the present age's vitalizing principle of conduct, benevolent censorship. That way peril lies.

Let us endeavor to approach this subject from the viewpoint of that admirable organization, so representative of our best and most decorous minds, the League for the Promotion of Prudery. As the League points out in its introductory enunciation of principles, the error and sin of modernist literature is that it tends to portray life as it is. All respectable persons realize that life in many of its phases is wholly unfit for the consideration of the pure. Take, for example, the regrettable matter of birth and all that precedes it. If our novelists, playwrights, and publicists would unanimously agree to refrain from any mention of natal or pre-natal processes, is it too much to hope that we could presently raise up a generation which should retain its unsullied mental innocency until, let us say, the legal age of twenty-one, or even conceivably later? Leave these undesirable matters to the biologists. Nobody reads biology anyway.

It is gratifying to note that the great and virtuous commonwealth of Pennsylvania has already initiated the good work by barring from its motion picture theatres any indication of how population is maintained. A young couple, though they be pasted over with marriage certificates thick as hotel labels on a bargain-sale trunk, may not be shown in the provocative act of purchasing a perambulator for a prospective baby. Even that gallinaceous makeshift, the stork, is banished from the screen. Ohio is not far behind. A publisher who ventured to invade its unsullied borders with an edition of Rabelais has been apprehended. In this propitious soil the League for the Promotion of Prudery is quietly working to have the Bible expurgated and the Talmud revised. Shakespeare must go.

Eventually as public support accrues to the League and after it has cleansed and disinfected fiction, poetry, and the drama, it purposes to direct its attention to art and journalism.

It must not be inferred that all imaginative creation, per se, is interdicted. Writers may still hold the mirror up to nature, provided nature is suitably clad. Modern fashions are regarded as impermissible.

While the growing strength of censorship is a profound satisfaction and encouragement to the truly upright, it is evident that this method can never go far enough. A complete Index Expurgatorius is the eventual aim, or, better still, an Index Prohibitus. Thus far there has been devised only a broadly modelled White List herewith presented for consideration. Stories, plays, and poems are to be regarded as allowable in the following classes:

(a) Political and business stories wherein honesty triumphs.
(b) Sunday school stories.
(c) Children and farm stories.
(d) Love stories; object, matrimony.
(e) Nature stories, though it must be remembered that some animals are coarse in their habits.

It is the League's plan to license only such authors as

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subscribe to the restrictions above. Others will be forbidden publication. Can any genuinely artistic heart fail to thrill at the prospect of a brighter, cleaner, purer world, wherein all the books will be of the school of Harold Bell Wright or Gene Stratton-Porter; wherein Apollyon and all his legions of darkness will flee before Pollyanna with her forces of sweetness and light?

SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS.

The American Form of the Novel

THE novel has always concerned itself with such incidents of the life performance as have been found significant by the age in which they occur. Its scope has been combat when combat was the major occupation of men. When complete stratification had taken place in European society, the story-telling emphasis shifted to the set of circumstances by which the hero was introduced into the social strata in which he was henceforth to function. Thus, where the Greek long story was content to deal with the adventure of arms, the mediaeval romance made a feat of arms the means, subordinate to the event, of the hero's admission into high society, slaying the enemy as a prelude to marrying the king's daughter and sharing the kingdom.

When, however, the goal of man's serious endeavor became, as it did in the last century, some sort of successful escape from social certitude, the scope of the novel was extended to include the whole ground of his struggle and its various objectives. Then came America and brought a state of things in which uncertainty multiplied as to what the objective of man's secret and incessant search should be. Except in a limited, personal sense we have never known in the United States just which of us is villain and which hero. In addition to the decay of recognized social categories, our novelists find themselves under the necessity of working out their story patterns on a set of shifting backgrounds, no two of which are entirely conformable. I myself, and I suspect my experience to be typical, have had to learn three backgrounds, as distinct, except for the language spoken, as Paris, Gopher Prairie and the Scottish Highlands. While I do not complain to the gods of these things, I maintain that it gives me a disadvantage compared to Mr. Galsworthy, say, who, however rotten he finds the warp of English society to be, still finds it regularly spaced and competent to sustain the design of any story he may elect to weave.

There can be, of course, as many arrangements of the items of individual experience as there are ways in which experience can widely happen. But these are not so many as might be supposed. Varieties of personal adventure are more or less pulled together by the social frame in which they occur. One of the recognized criterions of veracity in a novel is the question, could, or couldn't, the main incident have occurred in that fashion in a given type of society. But such a question can only be asked by people who have acquired the capacity to feel truth in respect to their own environment. It can never be asked by people for whom appreciations of pattern, as it affects the literary expression of experience, have been stereotyped to the warp of relationships which are no longer admitted as social determinants. For every novel that the reviewer elects for critical attention, he discards a dozen others of possibly equal workmanship, for no reason but that they deal with patterns that have ceased to have—or perhaps never did have—constructive relation to the society in which we live. Or, in cases where high veracity and perfection of form compel his admiration, as in The Age of Innocence, he makes his point out of the very failure of validity in the background, itself a fragment of an earlier, outworn social fabric. Below the limit of a possible claim on his attention, every reviewer is also aware of scores of novels, eyeless and amorphic, kept moving on the submerged social levels by the thousands of readers who never come any nearer the surface of the present than perhaps to be occasionally chilled by it.

Aside from questions of form, is not the difference between novels which compel our attention and those we lightly discard, just this validity of relation between social warp and individual pattern? It is not necessary that the supporting structure of society appear as subject matter, but a certain clear sense of it in the writer's mind.

It is hardly possible yet in America to produce so smooth an over-woven piece as Mr. Waddington of Wyck, with the technique of one of those detached motifs of Chinese embroidery, in which, though everywhere to be traced, not one thread of the sustaining fabric is visible. Miss Sinclair works under the conviction that the social structure ought never to be treated by the novelist as part of his undertaking, but that, I suspect, is due to her never having worked on the disconcertingly spaced and frequently sleazy background of American society. What we have to look for here is the ability, on the part of the writer, to fix upon the prophetic trend of happenings. Such a novel as Main Street should sustain itself a long time as a record of our discovery of the Community as villain, or, if you feel as some of us do toward its leading lady, as hero.

It is this necessity, forced upon us by recent social developments, of finding new, because as yet undeclared, points of balance in the arrangements of the American elements of story design, that has given rise to the notion that in America the novel need not concern itself with form primarily. But this can hardly be the case if we are to think of novel writing as an art, subject to the condition of survival in time.

The novel, more than any other written thing, is an attempt to persuade, at its best to compel, men to give over for a moment the pursuit of the distant goal, and savor the color, the intensity and solidarity of experience *while it is passing*. It is of no particular moment which one of the currents of experience that loop and whirl and cascade and backwater through the stream of human existence, is selected. It is important however, that it be presented in the idiom, that is to say in the life pattern, of the audience for whom it is intended. What I mean by pattern is the arrangement of story elements in true relation to the social structure by which they are displayed. In this sense form becomes a matter of the span of perceptive consciousness of the selected audience.

This gives, in our inchoate American life, the greatest latitude of incident, but confines the novelist rather strictly to a democratic structure. It deprives him of fixed goals of social or financial or political achievement as terminal points, since none of these things have any permanence in the American scheme of things. The utmost the American novelist can hope for, if he hopes at all to see his work included in the literature of his time, is that it may eventually be found to lie along in the direction of the growing tip of collective consciousness.

Preeminently the novelist's gift is that of access to the collective mind. But there is a curious secret relation be-

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tween the novelist's point of access and his grasp of form —and by form I mean all that is usually included in style, plus whatever has to do with the sense of something transacting between the book and its reader. Whoever lays hold on the collective mind at the node from which issues the green bough of constructive change, finds himself impelled toward what is later discovered to be the prophetic form. What, after all, is the slow growth of appreciation of a novelist of the first rank, but the simultaneous widening of our social consciousness to a sense of its own direction.

American novelists are often accused of a failure of form. But is this anything more than an admission of failure of access on the part of the critics? Characteristic art form is seldom perfected until the culture of which it is an expression comes to rest. Of all the factors influencing the American novel form, I should expect the necessity, inherent in a democratic society, of conforming more directly, at any given moment, to the *state* of the collective consciousness rather than to its *direction,* to be the determining item. This is what, generally speaking, conditions the indispensable quality of access. Under the democratic condition it can be achieved only by participation. There is no place in the American consciousness for the superior being standing about with his hands in his pockets, "passing remarks."

The democratic novelist must be inside his novel rather than outside in the Victorian fashion of Thackeray or the reforming fashion of Mr. Wells. He may, like Mr. Sherwood Anderson, be so completely inside as to be unclear in his conclusion about the goal, but there he is, Americanly, on his way. The reference of personal conduct to an overhead Judgment which forced the earlier novelist to assume the god in the disposition of his characters, has here given place to a true democratic desire of man to see himself as he is seen by the people with whom he does business. His search is not so much for judgment as for revelation, quick, nervous appreciations of place, relationship and solidarity. But in every case the validity of the American form will rest upon that intuitive access to the collective consciousness, which it is the dream, and probably the mission of democracy to achieve.

MARY AUSTIN.

A Note on Alcoves

IT is surprising what protean gifts a theme develops once you attempt to grapple with it. When the editors of the New Republic asked me to write about The Form and Scope of the Novel, the affair seemed simple. But, with the task actually begun, the typewriter bell may hardly tinkle thrice before one sees that the guide to further composition must be the once celebrated chapter, in I forget whose Natural History, upon the snakes of Iceland. It read, as you recall, "There are no snakes in Iceland." For one perceives that the form and scope of the novel, if not similarly non-existent, at least stay indeterminable in lands wherein the form and the scope of prose fiction stay limitless.

The sole aim of the written, printed and formally labeled novel is, I take it, to divert. Such is (one may assume with in any event quite reputable backing) the only aim of creative writing, and of all the arts. But much the same sort of diversion seems to be the purpose of a staggering number of human endeavors: and it is when one considers the novels which are not formally labeled, that the theme evasively assumes all manner of shapes, and the field of prose fiction is revealed as limitless.

I do not hunt paradox. I but wish in real sincerity to acknowledge that our trade of novel writing and publishing is an ineffably minor evincement of the vast and pride-evoking truth, that human beings are wiser than reason. Pure reason—I mean, as pure as human reason assays—reveals out of hand that the main course of daily living is part boredom, part active discomfort and fret, and, for the not inconsiderable rest, a blundering adherence to some standard derived from this or that hearsay. But human beings, in this one abnegation infinitely wise, here all discard the use of their reasoning powers, which are perhaps felt here to be at least as gullible as usual: and brave men cheerily deny their immersion in the futile muddle through which they toil lip-deep. Pinned to the wall, the more truthful of flesh and blood may grant that this current afternoon does, by the merest coincidence, prove answerable to some such morbid and over-colored description by people bent on being "queer": but in his mind forgetfulness is already about its charitable censorship of the events of the morning, to the intent that this amended account be placed on file with many expurgated editions of yesterday and the most brilliant romances about tomorrow. For human memory and human optimism are adepts at the fictions which everybody grasps, retails and tirelessly reiterates; they coin the fictions which every person weaves into the interminable extravaganza that he recites to himself as an accurate summing up of his own past and future: and everywhere about this earth's revolving surface moves a circulating library of unwritten novels bound in flesh and haberdashery.

Now the wholesome effect of these novels is patent. It is thanks to this brace of indefatigable romancers that nobody really needs to notice how the most of us, in unimportant fact, approach toward death through gray and monotonous corridors. Besides, one finds a number of colorful alcoves here and there, to be opened by intoxication or venery, by surrender to the invigorating lunacy of herd action, or even by mental concentration upon new dance-steps and the problems of auction bridge. One blunders, indeed, into a rather handsome number of such alcoves which, when entered, temporarily shut out the rigidity and the only exit of the inescapable corridor. And in addition, as we go, all sorts of merry tales are being interchanged about what lies beyond the nearing door and the undertaker's little black bag.

These are not, though, the only anaesthetics. The human maker of fiction furnishes yet other alcoves, whether with beautiful or shocking ideas, with many fancy-clutching toys that may divert the traveler's mind from dwelling on the tedium of his journey and the ambiguity of its end. I have not yet, of course, come to consideration of the formally labeled novel, for this much is true of every form of man-made fiction, whether it be concocted by poets or statesmen, by bishops in conclave or by advertisers in the back of magazines. And since memory and optimism, as has been said, are the archetypal Homer and St. John, the supreme and most altruistic of all deceivers, the omnipotent and undying masters of omnipresent fictive creation, their "methods" are in the main pursued by the great pair's epigoni; who likewise tend to deal with the large deeds of superhuman persons seen through a glow

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of amber lucency not wholly unkin to that of maple syrup.

Of the romances which make for business prosperity and religious revivals and wars to end war forever, here is no call to speak. Nor need I here point out that wellnigh everyone who anywhere writes prose today, whether it takes the form of a tax return or a letter beginning "My dear Sir" or a magazine story, is consciously composing fiction: and in the spoken prose of schoolrooms and courts of law and social converse, I think, no candid person will deny that expediency and invention collaborate. It may be true that lies have short legs, but civilization advances upon them.

So do we all exist, as if in a warm grateful bath, submerged and soothed by fiction. In contrast to the inhabitants of the Scilly Islands, who are reputed to have lived by taking in one another's washing, so do we live by interchanging tales that will not wash. There seems to be no bound, no frontier trading-post, appointed anywhere to this barter of current fiction, not in the future nor in the years behind. Men have been, almost cynically, shown with what ease the romance which we call history may be recast throughout, now that America rejoices in a past which has all been painstakingly rewritten with more care of the King's English, and wherein the War of the Revolution takes its proper place as the latest addition to the list of German outrages. Our newspapers continue the war-time economizing of intelligence, and still serve patriotic substitutes in serials, wherein Red and Yellow and Black perils keep colorful the outlook, and fiends oppose broadminded seraphim in every political matter, and Messrs. Lenin and Trotsky emulate the apostle by dying daily. Our clergy are no less prolific in their more futuristic school of art, and on every Sabbath morning discourse engagingly of paradise and of that millennium of which the advent is somehow being brought nearer, one gathers, by the more energetic of our prelates taking notes and whiskey in the larger restaurants. The past, the present and the future are thus everywhere presented in the terms of generally pleasure-giving prose fictions: and life is rendered passable by our believing in those which are most to our especial liking.

Well, it is the task of the novelist—I mean, at last, the novelist who is frankly listed as such in Who's Who—to aid according to his abilities in this old world-wide effort, so to delude mankind that nobody from birth to death need ever really bother about his, upon the whole, unpromising situation in the flesh. It is the sole aim of the novelist, alike in art and commerce, to divert us from unprofitable and rational worrying, to head yet one more desperate sally from that ordered living and the selves of which we are tired.

So I suspect there must always be, to the last digit, precisely as many "methods" as there are novelists. For the business of the novelist is to tell untruths that will be diverting: and of their divertingness he can have no touchstone, before the receipt of royalty statements, save only the response which these untruths evoke from him. Some tale-tellers find themselves most readily bedrugged by yearning toward loveliness unknown and unattainable: these are, we say, our romanticists. To them are, technically, opposed the Pollyannas among fiction writers, who can derive a sort of obscure aesthetic comfort from considering persons even less pleasantly situated than themselves—somewhat as a cabin passenger on a sinking ship might consider the poor devils in the steerage—and so write "realism." But the inspiring principle remains unchanged: you think of that which is above or below you in order to avoid thinking of what is about you. So it really does not greatly matter whether you travel with Marco Polo to Cathay or with the Kennicotts to Gopher Prairie. The excursion may be for the purpose of looking at beautiful things wistfully or at ugly things contemptuously: the point is that it is an excursion from the place where you regard over-familiar things with a yawn.

These truisms considered—and one fails to see why anybody outside the more popular magazines need dispute them—the form and scope of even the formally labeled novel seem fluctuating and indeterminable. The novelist will write in the form—with such dramatic, epic or lyric leanings as his taste dictates—which he personally finds alluring: his rhythms will be such as caress his personal pair of ears: and the scope of his writing will be settled solely by what he personally does or does not find interesting. For the serious prose craftsman will write primarily to divert himself—with a part thrifty but in the main a philanthropic underthought of handing on, at a fair price, the playthings and the games which he contrives, for the diversion of those with a like taste in anodynes. And to do this will content him. For he will believe that he may win to fame by brewing oblivion, he will hope to invent, if he be very lucky, some quite new form of "let's pretend." But he will not believe that anybody with a valid claim to be considered a post-graduate child can gravely talk about affixing limits to the form and scope of that especial pastime.

JAMES BRANCH CABELL.

The Novel Démeublé

THE novel, for a long while, has been over-furnished. The property-man has been so busy on its pages, the importance of material objects and their vivid presentation have been so stressed, that we take it for granted whoever can observe, and can write the English language, can write a novel. Often the latter qualification is considered unnecessary.

In any discussion of the novel, one must make it clear whether one is talking about the novel as a form of amusement, or as a form of art; since they serve very different purposes and in very different ways. One does not wish the egg one eats for breakfast, or the morning paper, to be made of the stuff of immortality. The novel manufactured to entertain great multitudes of people must be considered exactly like a cheap soap or a cheap perfume, or cheap furniture. Fine quality is a distinct disadvantage in articles made for great numbers of people who do not want quality but quantity, who do not want a thing that "wears," but who want change,—a succession of new things that are quickly threadbare and can be lightly thrown away. Does anyone pretend that if the Woolworth-store windows were piled high with Tanagra figurines at ten cents, they could for a moment compete with Kewpie brides in the popular esteem? Amusement is one thing; enjoyment of art is another.

Every writer who is an artist knows that his "power of observation," and his "power of description," form but a low part of his equipment. He must have both, to be sure;

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but he knows that the most trivial of writers often have a very good observation. Mérimée said in his remarkable essay on Gogol: "L'art de choisir parmi les innombrable traits que nous offre la nature est, après tout, bien plus difficile que celui de les observer avec attention et de les rendre avec exactitude."

There is a popular superstition that "realism" asserts itself in the cataloguing of a great number of material objects, in explaining mechanical processes, the methods of operating manufacturies and trades, and in minutely and unsparingly describing physical sensations. But is not realism, more than it is anything else, an attitude of mind on the part of the writer toward his material, a vague definition of the sympathy and candor with which he accepts, rather than chooses, his theme? Is the story of a banker who is unfaithful to his wife and who ruins himself by speculation in trying to gratify the caprices of his mistresses, at all reinforced by a masterly exposition of the banking system, our whole system of credits, the methods of the Stock Exchange? Of course, if the story is thin, these things do reinforce it in a sense,—any amount of red meat thrown into the scale to make the beam dip. But are the banking system and the Stock Exchange worth being written about at all? Have such things any place in imaginative art?

The automatic reply to this question is the name of Balzac. Yes, certainly, Balzac tried out the value of literalness in the novel, tried it out to the uttermost, as Wagner did the value of scenic literalness in the music drama. He tried it, too, with the passion of discovery, with the inflamed zest of an unexampled curiosity. If the heat of that furnace could not give hardness and sharpness to material accessories, no other brain will ever do it. To reproduce on paper the actual city of Paris; the houses, the upholstery, the food, the wines, the game of pleasure, the game of business, the game of finance: a stupendous ambition—but, after all, unworthy of an artist. In exactly so far as he succeeded in pouring out on his pages that mass of brick and mortar and furniture and proceedings in bankruptcy, in exactly so far he defeated his end. The things by which he still lives, the types of greed and avarice and ambition and vanity and lost innocence of heart which he created—are as vital today as they were then. But their material surroundings, upon which he expended such labor and pains . . . . the eye glides over them. We have had too much of the interior decorator and the "romance of business" since his day. The city he built on paper is already crumbling. Stevenson said he wanted to blue-pencil a great deal of Balzac's "presentation" —and he loved him beyond all modern novelists. But where is the man who could cut one sentence from the stories of Mérimée? And who wants any more detail as to how Carmencita and her fellow factory girls made cigars? Another sort of novel? Truly. Isn't it a better sort?

In this discussion another great name automatically occurs. Tolstoi was almost as great a lover of material things as Balzac, almost as much interested in the way dishes were cooked, and people were dressed, and houses were furnished. But there is this determining difference; the clothes, the dishes, the moving, haunting interiors of those old Moscow houses, are always so much a part of the emotions of the people that they are perfectly synthesized; they seem to exist, not so much in the author's mind, as in the emotional penumbra of the characters themselves. When it is fused like this, literalness ceases to be literalness—it is merely part of the experience.

If the novel is a form of imaginative art, it cannot be at the same time a vivid and brilliant form of journalism. Out of the teeming, gleaming stream of the present it must select the eternal material of art. There are hopeful signs that some of the younger writers are trying to break away from mere verisimilitude, and, following the development of modern painting, to interpret imaginatively the material and social investiture of their characters; to present their scene by suggestion rather than by enumeration. The higher processes of art are all processes of simplification. The novelist must learn to write, and then he must unlearn it; just as the modern painter learns to draw, and then learns when utterly to disregard his accomplishment, when to subordinate it to a higher and truer effect. In this direction only, it seems to me, can the novel develop into anything more varied and perfect than all of the many novels that have gone before.

One of the very earliest American novels might well serve as a suggestion to later writers. In The Scarlet Letter how truly in the spirit of art is the mise-en-scène presented. That drudge, the theme-writing high school student, could scarcely be sent there for information regarding the manners and dress and interiors of the Puritans. The material investiture of the story is presented as if unconsciously; by the reserved, fastidious hand of an artist, not by the gaudy fingers of a showman or the mechanical industry of a department store window-dresser. As I remember it, in the twilight melancholy of that book, in its consistent mood, one can scarcely ever see the actual surroundings of the people; one feels them, rather, in the dusk.

Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there—that, it seems to me, is created. It is the inexplicable presence of the thing not named, of the overtone divined by the ear but not heard by it, the verbal mood, the emotional aura of the fact or the thing or the deed, that gives high quality to the novel or the drama, as well as to poetry itself.

Literalness, when applied to the presenting of mental reactions and of physical sensations seems to be no more effective than when it is applied to material things. A novel crowded with physical sensations is no less a catalogue than one crowded with furniture. A book like The Rainbow by Mr. Lawrence, sharply reminds one how vast a distance lies between emotion and mere sensory reactions. Characters can be almost de-humanized by a laboratory study of the behavior of their bodily organs under sensory stimuli—can be reduced, indeed, to mere animal pulp. Can one imagine anything more terrible than the story of Romeo and Juliet, rewritten in prose by Mr. Lawrence?

How wonderful it would be if we could throw all the furniture out of the window; and along with it, all the meaningless reiterations concerning physical sensations, all the tiresome old patterns, and leave the room as bare as the stage of a Greek theatre, or as that house into which the glory of Pentecost descended; leave the scene bare for the play of emotions, great and little—for the nursery tale, no less than the tragedy, is killed by tasteless amplitude. The elder Dumas enunciated a great principle when he said that to make a drama, a man needed one passion, and four walls.

WILLA SIBERT CATHER.

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The Difference Between Life and Fiction

IT seems to me that fiction, in whatever stage of development, still retains the purpose of the fairy-tale. But the fairy-tale, contrary to what many people suppose, has a very serious purpose. We come into the world equipped with a capacity of varied emotional response to our environment. That environment, even in its simplest terms, the home and family, presents itself to our childish intelligence as a mysterious chaos of facts; and the greater world outside this little world seems, as we come in contact with it, more chaotic and mysterious still. In the task of growing up, it is necessary for our emotional responses to this chaotic world to be coordinated; we must deal with this huge world quite as if we understood what it was really like. So that from the first a process of education goes on which undertakes to tell us—not so much what the world is really like, for that would only be to make confusion worse confounded—but a notion of it which will arrange our impulses toward it into some kind of order. What is required—for we have as children a wealth of emotions and little experience—is an *emotionally intelligible* interpretation of the world. The most preposterous fairy-tale, if it is a good fairy-tale—if it is in any sense a work of art, and arranges the emotions with which it so fantastically deals into some kind of rhythmic pattern—tells us more about friendship, love, ambition, folly and heroism, and their significance to ourselves,—than we knew before. So that it is, essentially, a kind of simple pragmatic truth that is aimed at in the fairy-tale. We cannot learn life by living it—we must have some kind of notion about it to enable us to digest our experiences as we get them. And of all kinds of teachings, that which comes to us through our emotional perceptions is the most fundamental, precisely because it is the most effective.

But the pragmatic truth of these simple works of art is different from plain factual truth, and in a sense an opposite of it, in so far as factual truth remains, for all our efforts to understand and arrange it, chaotic. Underneath all the picturesque disorder of the fairy-tale, there are the outlines of a very simple and orderly world.

And the same, I think, is true of the adult novel. Our experience has by this time been enlarged, so that we delight in a picture of life, let us say, in terms of jobs, wages, politics, and erotic misadventures, rather than in one in terms of quests, treasures, talking bushes and dragons. But underneath these recognizable incidents of our chaotic daily lives there must be the outlines of a simple and orderly world—a world more simple and orderly than the unfathomable nature of life's mysteries—but emotionally we require the satisfaction which only simple certainties can bring. For we still, as adults, read novels for the same unconscious and serious purpose with which we read fairy-tales as children. We want to know more about our relation to the world. But we emphatically do not want the raw material of life; we want life made emotionally intelligible—and that can only be effected by a process of simplification and arrangement which a hostile observer, indifferent to these purposes, might call suppression, or censorship, or lying.

Even so, the fable serves the purpose which the mere facts fail to serve. I have read in my life only one book which was, in my opinion, measurably true to the more common facts which constitute ordinary life. That book—and I recommend it to the curious reader as a perfect illustration of the difference between artistic truth and truth to facts—is One Man, by Robert Steele. Since I have mentioned it, I suppose I should add that its truth to the facts of ordinary life does not consist in the specific nature of the crimes, misdemeanors and follies there related—but rather in the irrelevance to each other of the emotional states which it records. There are in this book episodes—dozens of them—which would have served Dostoievsky for a climax. But, as here presented, they have no emotional validity whatever, because they have no relation to what comes before and after. Judged as a work of art, the book is preposterous and trivial. Its sole significance is as a document showing what human life, before it has been subjected to the processes of art, is like. Ordinary people are not as "bad" as the hero of this book; but they are, I think, quite as absurd and contradictory. The true-to-facts story of anyone I know would make a document equally inchoate and meaningless with this, if perhaps a little less sensational. And it is because human life in the raw is like this, that human beings need and desire those simplifications, those interpretations, which by suppressing, altering, rearranging the facts, permit what is left to have some emotional meaning.

No one, I think, who has any very acute sense of the variety and jumbled irrelevance of the facts of life as they present themselves to us in ordinary human experience would either imagine that the literal record of these facts constituted a story, or be so ambitious as to attempt to frame them *all* into an intelligible emotional sequence. Yet this—either or both—is what the writers of "realistic" fiction are currently and disapprovingly said to be doing by many American critics. There is supposed to be a "school" of writers whose theory of fiction is to put down everything "just as it happens in real life." There are gloomy forebodings of the death of the art of fiction under the assaults of the "literal chroniclers of life." These fears are quite unnecessary, and the lovers of romance can take heart. Not Theodore Dreiser in his most zealous realistic mood ever undertook to set down more than the limited and particular selection of facts which he deemed necessary to convey the quality of his emotion.

There is, I think, no quarrel between romance and realism. The selection of facts is more rigorous and more conventional in romantic fiction, more generous and more adventurous in realistic fiction. I cannot even assert, as a writer of fiction that has been very flatteringly called realistic, that realism aims more ardently than romance at truth. It does seem to me to have the merit, whatever that may count for, of being more intimately recognizable as a vehicle of truth by those whose experiences afford them the opportunity of testing in their own minds the literalness of the accounts by which that truth is sought to be conveyed. The literal truthfulness of Sinclair Lewis's account of a day-coach in the Middle West may not imply an imaginative insight into the souls of its passengers; but there is no doubt that it puts many of us into a receptive frame of mind toward emotional conclusions about middle-western souls which we might otherwise be disposed to reject as too painful. The function of literalness in factual detail would seem, in fiction, to be much the same as it is in the court-room—to make it harder to escape the obligation of feeling "unpleasant" emotions. The author's motive is plain: he has these emotions, and he wishes to lessen the burden of them by sharing them with others. And the reason why realism is so often of this "unpleasant"

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character, is simply that happy emotions need no such elaborate reinforcement. We do not need to have it proved that the hero and heroine lived happily ever after; the assertion suffices. It is when they did not live happily ever after that many painful—and intimately recognizable—details are needed to persuade us to believe that so it happened. But if we read these realistic accounts of our human misadventures, it is not because the manner of the telling has a virtue of its own, but because we desire to enlarge our conception of our lives so as to bring these difficult and painful facts also to some emotionally intelligible relationship with the rest of our experience.

And if any of the new kinds of scientific knowledge, such for example as psycho-analysis, are to be of use to the novelist, it must be, I think, not by virtue of any magic of "truth" which they contain, and certainly not by bringing new facts within the scope of the novelist's interest, but rather because they may possibly simplify his task of selection and arrangement—because they give him certain conceptions of life as emotionally intelligible and possibly as fundamentally appealing as the oldest fairy tale.

FLOYD DELL.

The Scope of Fiction

THE *function* of all fiction I choose to ignore as a useless bone of contention. To the practical as well as the idealistic and the romantic it would appear as though fiction, of necessity, should serve some high idealistic or, at worst, useful purpose: i. e. it should illuminate, elevate or entertain according to the various individual acceptances of the meanings that may lie in those words. I submit, however, that one individually inclined and with a gift for picturing life in any form, romantically or otherwise, has neither the time nor the wit to discover amidst the hopelessly divided and contending factions a certain and generally acceptable course of procedure. He must write as he feels and with such skill as he possesses. Scope, I submit, must remain a matter of instinct. He must sense for himself the limitations of his theme as well as its ultimate and possible ramifications. And in this, I am sure, he will be most heartily sustained by all wiseacres in the matter of living and expressing oneself. For they know full well, and most especially where fiction is concerned, that he is a damned fool who seeks to please everyone or even to concern himself very much with the opinions of any other. Life is as it presents itself to him. And he must interpret it as it appeals to him or not at all. We are not interested in reflected views. And assuredly, to pass to the other extreme of the problem, the dullest newsboy or bootblack or barber is entitled to his Diamond Dick and his Brave and Bold. And the genius who yearns to contrive these things and who finds a ready market for them would be a dunce indeed to be persuaded that they were beneath or beyond his skill or that he should pester his soul as to their scope or the effect of the same or any lack in connection with the same upon others.

Those scholastically or scientifically bent, as we know, will none of anything that does not concern itself learnedly with at least attempts at interpretations if not solutions or, at worst, thoughts tending in that direction. Forthright fiction is the last and least of their interests. The seeker after style will cleave only to the stylist be his substance what it may. And the lover of romance desires only romance. By the same token the lover of fact or realism, as he sees such things, looked upon Sir Walter Scott as either a fool or a conscienceless distorter of life for cash; as Taine looked upon Dickens.

Personally I am for every man who selects his own poison. He senses dimly, maybe, what the elements of his nature require. The author of Pluck and Luck is a craftsman of sorts and if he have a following what more by way of justification does he need? I know, for one, that I could never win his readers away from him. For the same reason I have never for one moment entertained the notion that any form of fiction or fact even, could prove acceptable to more than a very modest number of individuals who chanced to be upon the same plane or before the same gate of thought. There is too much of apparently that essential difference in nature and human point of view—that infinite variety which so artfully manages to entertain us all by setting us at sixes and sevens—to permit of a definite rule of thumb in any department of letters. At the height of his prestige every man and more especially every author, I think, is looked upon as a silly-billy if not a scoundrel by some—his leading either worthless or dangerous. The bible will not do for Mohammedans and Nietzsche has no significance for the followers of Mrs. Eddy. Even the Thousand and One Nights are confronted by those who do not care for that sort of thing. And all who write, by whatsoever rule or artifice, are faced by those who do not read at all and never will, not even the newspapers.

In the face of such a mystifying diversity of sentiment and taste to enter upon an inquiry as to the legitimate scope of the novel is to me about as important as entering upon a game of authors. Even when I confine the inquiry to the type of interpretation to which I find myself hopelessly addicted I am no better off. I am for the type of fiction that confines its attempted interpretations to not only the possibilities but the probabilities and I have no reading patience with anything that does not compel me by the charm of its verisimilitude. I am always troubled, more in contemplating my own works than those of others, as to whether some trying and rather complex situation be sufficiently plausible if not exactly true. Yet, when I look back over my personal contacts and experiences I know full well, that I have never had the slightest hope of exaggerating reality or of even making known the seeming improbabilities, not to mention the impossibilities, that I know to be true. In avoiding them I have no doubt been exercising my judgment as to the legitimate scope of fiction. Yet I would never venture to offer my predilections as a guide to another. Far from it. Rather I would that he should illuminate me with his instincts and conclusions and even inhibitions.

However, regardless of realist or romanticist or the most painstaking dispenser of fact in science or history, I know by now that life may not be put down in its entirety even though we had at our command the sum of the arts and the resourcefulness of the master of artifice himself. There are, to begin with, suggestions and intimations just beyond the present scope of the senses that appear forever to elude us. And within the present range of human contact or report there is an immense body of fact that will not be penned. It is of a texture and substance that is beyond the palate and the stomach of the race. Lastly there is not only the matter of individual equipment for artistic interpretation or the lack of it, but the limitations of any possible reading audience. Granting the musical sensitiveness of a Brahms, the color and

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light evocations of a Vermeer or a Monticelli, the psychologic subtlety of a Berkeley and the compendious information of a Buckle and assuming them all useable in the compilation of fiction, how many would follow one? And who has them? Or, has had? We have already witnessed the sensitive approaches of a Baudelaire and a Poe, but to what ends? Gods of the illuminati, lost, already, in all but impenetrable gloom. At the very best the ablest of those who essay the arts, and more especially the scriptic branches, fumble and stumble amid the complexities and abstrusities which man, backed by the immensities which project him, presents. If one doubts one has but to reread the masters in the light of current knowledge and current anticipations; to seek in fiction much that now wraith-wise stalks within the inner recesses of the imagination and of psychic perception. The time is not ripe. And when it is, other things for which it is not ripe have already flung forward their ray-like emanations, certain harbingers of their approach. We live in the hour or nearly so. Unconsciously I have been delimiting more of scope.

So when all is said and done and in the face of what has but now been said the problem of scope must ever be personal and individual. It is not for academic interpretation or fixation. We know, for instance, that for Eugène Sue and his admirers five hundred thousand words and endlessly pieced together verbal canvases and tapestries are by no means sufficient to cause either himself or his followers to be excommunicated on the ground of unreasonable indulgence in scope. The man and his works are as many would have them. To those who like Richardson and his Pamela, and I confess myself one of his admirers, his epistolary flights, even unto four and five hundred thousand words are by no means too much. Because of the time in and of which he writes perhaps, I find myself following him with interest. Since scope, in part at least, might be assumed to predicate length or brevity as well as pleasure to the reader, I would have to confess that the scope of his work is satisfactory to me. By the same token the scope of Les Misérables is just as acceptable, though scarcely more so, than the minute intaglio of Thais. And I find Sappho, Carmen and Camille as full and as satisfactorily developed scope-wise as Madame Bovary, Mlle. de Maupin and Vanity Fair—and as interesting. In fact I accept the short story, Without Benefit of Clergy, as full and satisfactory a picture of life as The Brothers Karamazov, A Family of Noblemen, or Anna Karenina but no more so. Why? I will try to tell you.

Each suggests in its way, though the first may require but minutes and the other days to read, that unescapable and yet somehow pitiable finiteness in the midst of infinity which, think as we will, contrives to touch and move the understanding. Each suggests, in full, a land, a people, a period, a mood. Each etches the individual against a background of enormous possibilities and enormous limitations. Each conveys with moving completeness an all embracing understanding shot through with an enfolding and comforting pity. What more, pray, is it, that we ask of scope?

I can see, of course, that with the drift of time, new facts, new moods and new ambitions may arise which may cause our present theories and apprehensions in regard to fiction to change completely. The classic world knew nothing of the novel or the symphony. The father of the English novel could scarcely have contemplated a Spoon River Anthology, A Mystic Warrior or such a curious intimation of change as lies in the alliterative color paragraphs of a Gertrude Stein. And it is possible that the interpreter and entertainer of life a few generations hence will find himself by reason of his training, working with the brush as well as the pen and conveying, via the notes of the scale the thought or word that verbally eludes him. I hope so. Yet sufficient for the day is the picture thereof. And for this day, I presume, understanding, sympathy, a love of life and of character plus a sense of form and a delicate appreciation of word values and their respective colors and rhythmic arrangements will have to suffice. As for the scope of any particular work, that must remain as the individual senses and wills it. If he is true to some mood or need which finds an echo in the natures of many, the scope of that which he chooses to present will be entirely satisfactory to the audience, great or small, which he is able to command. And thereupon rests the reason for his work as well as its import.

THEODORE DREISER.

The Major Issue

TO the incidental character of the novel as a reflection of life we give great care; to its essential nature as a contribution to life we bring ignorance and neglect.

How would we regard the critic who judged El Greco, Rembrandt, the African woodcarver by their conformance with a set of rules of anatomy and geometry textbooks? Would we not say: the artist who creates by means of physical forms needs knowledge of physical laws, knowledge of physical structure. For it is of these materials that he articulates his vision and his form. But he is an artist insofar as he has a vision and a form. His knowledge of muscles, torsos, limbs, of spatial quantities is his knowledge of *means*. If we wish to know endogenously about muscles, torsos, limbs, we do not go to the artist . . . although we may go to men who have learned vastly from artists. And if we wish to understand intelligently the particular use which the particular artist makes of such matters, we must learn first what the artist wants to say and determine by that measure if he has used them well.

The novelist's need of individual and social psychology is a pretty good analogue to the plastic artist's need of physical forms: the novelist's use of customs, manners, institutions, creeds, is kin to the plastic artist's use of the ways of mass and space. How comes it then that we think we have struck to the heart of the nature and reason of a novel when we discuss its psychological correctness, (its verisimilitude with our own idea of certain men and women) or its awareness of certain social problems?

Of course, there is reason for this, but it is not as some of us doubtless would be pleased to have it, that this is a "scientific age." "Even in our fiction," to quote the imaginary professor, "we look for serious discussion of fact and of truth." To whom I make reply: "In your fiction, you look for corroborating statements of your own particular brands of fact and truth—brands put up from previous creative contributions: which is quite another matter." It is not scientific nor conducive to the advantage of science, to judge a novel in terms let us say of its "psychological accuracy" or of its "faithful reflection of social reality." For to do this is to accept as an Absolute Measure of accuracy and faithfulness the rationalized data of previous creators or groups of creators; and thereby to hinder the continuity of man's contribution to reality of experience which is, from the scientific standpoint, part of the function of creative art. Here as elsewhere the gap between science and art is truly the gap between false science

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and bad art. To be scientific about art is to be aesthetic about it.

Nor is it necessary to go back to Aristotle. Enough, as regards that very great man's Aesthetic, to say that his meaning in the phrase "Imitation of nature" was determined by a positive and common animistic understanding of nature which included primarily the dynamic principle of the individual will and which most of us moderns lack: and that it was limited by an ignorance of the processes of the human Psyche which was excusable in Aristotle but is less excusable in Mr. Babbitt . . .

Let us skip to the nineteenth century. German Romanticism and French Romanticism, by respective metaphysical and aesthetic methods, brought new sentient worlds to the use of the evolving will of Europe. The hierarchic stuffs so satisfactory to Shakespeare, Montaigne, Racine, no longer served the creator. So Romanticism ordered *Receptivity to Material*. All fields, all worlds, all "realities" . . . from the innermost ego to the farthermost sea . . . became the stuff of expression. Despite the complexity of this and the intricate relation of the artist and the group, one can say directly enough that to the novelist this meant a simple thing: here once more was adequate material whereby he could express himself. The creator was as ever active and dynamic. The material, at least in the ultimate process toward art, was fuel, symbol, means—anything but end. Now, after the creative act, came the Program. Balzac assured us that he was Secretary to Society. Flaubert vowed that from his works the least personal taint had been excised. Zola and the Goncourt brothers discoursed on Darwin whom they never understood and framed the Naturalist novel which they never wrote. For Balzac was the opposite of social secretary: he was the creator of dense organic forms to the making of which he kneaded the "life" of France as the baker kneads flour. Flaubert, as weak an analyst as ever gained fame for being a great one, was a pure and powerful intuitif: he was a true progenitor of imagism and of cubism: he made of Emma Bovary, Salammbô, Saint Anthony and Frédéric Moreau successive expressionistic forms of his own uncomfortable state in France. Only the disciples of Zola, whose names we forget, wrote Naturalist novels according to the program. And the trouble with them lay not with a program good or bad: it lay with their own lack of creative power.

Now, during the propaganda periods of Romanticism, when *receptivity to fresh material* was a point to be fought for, the terms realist and naturalist as indicating acceptance of the romantic attitude had meaning. The fresh material of the romanticist became the reality of the realist. The realists, later the naturalists, were they who espoused and practiced the romanticist aesthetic. Correctly, therefore, realist and romanticist were one: and during the romanticist period alone did the word realism, applied to the novel, have sense as a defining term. Moreover, in those rare cases where the romanticist will for new-worlds-to-conquer begot the finality of a new-conquered-world (a true work of art), the romanticist-realist ended in classicism. His work was classic. The whole lot of opponent terms equated into zero.

Never are these terms with their old connotations heard today in France and Germany where they were born. They are still with us, where they are merely borrowed. Outside of this technical and relative meaning about which most of us are as ignorant as we are of the aesthetic schools of Egypt, realism as referred to art and the novel is as senseless a term as has ever been picked up from a junk-shop. Every artist that has lived in the world is a realist insofar as himself is real and as his material, determined by himself and the world, must be real also. But no artist conceivable to man can be a realist in the sense of our critical implication—the sense of an absolute reality which true scientists would not arrogate to mathematics and certainly not to man. "It is the highest glory of man," said Remy de Gourmont, "that there is no science of man." Our standard of reality is an accumulating, gyrating and disappearing flux of subjective contributions. If there is a science of man, its name is aesthetics, and its axiom: that each new contribution shall be gauged by the inner law of its own genesis. And here is an axiom that does away with ninety-nine one-hundredths of our "intelligent comment" on novels that create characters and discuss conditions "true to life."

What happens to us is simple. Receptivity to material was a *means* for the creation of the nineteenth century Epic—an Epic which I am convinced is still in the pre-Homeric stage. That receptivity we have made into an *End*. The Continental Europeans are indefatigable program-makers. They made a program of the liberating process of the nineteenth century novel. We use that program like pedantic children to measure our own works and give them meaning: with the result that we rob them of what meaning they have. Meantime in Europe, they have twentieth century novels—and twentieth century programs whereby to gauge them.

Program-making is a vital part of the process whereby the social body more or less assimilates those new experiences and forms of life which are literature and art. But program-making must start from a recognition of the extra-intellectual nature of creation. The intellect does not create, it measures and brings up what it apprehends. The value of imaginative literature, even pragmatically as *nourishment to life,* lies in the fact that it creates what the intellect—theory, program, a priori standards of good, bad, right and wrong—does not as yet possess. For the intellect possesses what was created *before*. Hence contemporary art can never fall within the scope of pre-existing programs. And to judge the novel—its value as a contribution to literature and life—on the basis of any given psychological or documentary measure of fact, truth, reality and the like, is irrelevant and absurd.

This formulated problem of scope and theory concerns the novelist only indirectly: only insofar as he is affected by the critic who, rationalizing his work on the basis of the work itself or on the basis of some forebear's work, either aids or clogs the process of assimilating the novelist's contribution to the sum of social experience. Let the novelist think that he is primarily concerned with socialism, housing problems, psycho-analysis and the like. If he is an artist, his thinking will be but a detail of his work; and if he is not an artist his work will be but a negligible detail of his thinking. "From the beginning to the end," wrote Cervantes, "Don Quixote is an attack on the romances of chivalry." With this mouse of a program he produced his mountain of an epic, because he was a mountain—a veritable sea and mountain—of a man. The aesthetic value of any novel is the end-product of its related elements of life. The novelist who deals with, and relates into organic form, elements of life, with whatever intellectual conviction, may create Beauty if he has that virtue in him. But the novelist who tries to deal directly with Beauty, get at it directly, short-cutting the elements of life, is doomed. The artist in the act of creation can afford to be anything rather than an aesthete.

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But the critic and the public—let them look to their ways! Let them cease from studying a means as the End. Let them cease from parotting decayed programs. Let them not think that they have dealt with a novel . . . however much they praise it . . . when they have discussed its "psychology" and its "documentary material." (The term "psychological novel" has less meaning than the term "physiological oil-painting.")

We have a few true creators, capturers of organic form—which is another term for life—from the hinterlands at which mankind rekindles its fires and forges its tomorrows. And we have the perennial Mass—passive, indolent, like a woman fond of reflections, hostile to all *contributions,* since they mean renewal, effort, change. Which will the American critic serve: the dross of the Mass which is the Mass itself, or the spirit of the Mass which is the artist?

WALDO FRANK.

The Novel of Tomorrow

ALREADY we have mosaics of beauty in the American novel. But it lacks organic beauty.

In the modern novels of England the high example of organic beauty seems to be the work of Hudson. No one knows what he does; but his touch unseals an essence.

In the American novel we have nothing approaching this essence. One is grateful, in these days of the triumphant discovery of the commonplace, for mere beautiful mosaics. But these have little to do with the basic beauty, the organic beauty which a novel must breathe before it can approximate its potential scope and function.

Now organic beauty in any art must be compact of beauty not already familiar to us. Familiar beauty can give us the mosaics. But it is strangeness in beauty which alone can weave the spell and bear the perfume. This is not to say unreality; but on the contrary a deeper reality than we are accustomed to divine. The reality of literal levels of perception to which we do not ordinarily penetrate or of which, rather, we are not often conscious as they penetrate our own plane. Professor Eucken's claim that the spiritual world is "an independent reality, waiting to be apprehended, waiting to be incorporated into our universe" is enormously served by art whose functioning is so largely in extensions of the ordinary faculties. Between the naturalistic novel, which is a record, and the romantic novel, which is the product of human imagining, lies this other novel, the novel of tomorrow, concerned with imminent yet almost undivined reality of human conduct, human dream, perceived "for their own sakes, with the eyes of disinterested love."

Our failure may lie in the fact that such beauty as our novels have is chiefly concerned with moral idealism and romantic love, as we know them now. Our moral idealism is still intent on the exoteric with—shall we say?—either simple standards which ought long ago to have been taken for granted or conventionalized standards having no correspondence with the mystery of conduct. Therefore our novels devote themselves to, say, one emerging from a crude upbringing to the point of being hounded by her "furies" to escape tawdriness. Or even with those records of Henry James, that—Conrad calls him—that "historian of the individual conscience, of adventure in which only choice souls are involved"—crucial instances, always suffused with a certain beauty, but always the beauty of the individual conscience in known areas. Moral beauty rather than esoteric beauty. And as for the treatment in novels of romantic love, that is always a matter of bright feathers, of the pas de seul before the cave door, our only advance from that cave door courting being that there are antiphonal feathers and dancing instead of masculine antics alone. In spite of the fact that there is, both in idealism and in love, something not ourselves which is the glory of the experience, still the novel continues to treat only of measurable reactions, rarely calling down the utter sunlit areas where every human soul does sometime enter. Now these sunlit areas are a part of life, of reality. If they can be experienced, they can be incarnated in the novel. And it is these sunlit spaces of discernible reality which alone can give to the novel a basis of beauty.

Moreover these reaches are not merely extensions of moral idealism or of romantic love. Neither the one nor the other may be of dominating concern there, save in some form so heightened that it has passed into pure beauty. Nor are these areas remote; it is their power that they interpenetrate the homeliest lives and the most ordinary surroundings. This is a point which the worshipper of mosaics of beauty will not readily admit and perhaps he is right about his mosaics. But organic beauty is everywhere at home.

The function of the novel is not to treat of life as it appears to the ordinary eye; or even to treat life in its ordinary aspect if that were ascertainable. It is not even to treat of life as it should be, if *that* were ascertainable. Its function is not primarily to report the familiar at all. The function of the novel is to reflect the familiar as permeated by the unfamiliar; to reflect the unknown in its daily office of permeating the known.

Thus the novelist is to go not only "joying in his visible universe" but in that universe by which his own is interpenetrated. That universe invisible save as music or color or the word or some other high manifestation causes it to flower in human experience.

It is this high manifestation of the word which Hudson makes. He causes unfamiliar verities to enter our ken as verities. For the poetic mind, the mind then of the novelist at his best, is the perceiver of the real curve of life, the knower of something at least of its inner ecstasy. . . . How shall this interpretation best be made? This accomplishment concerns the form of the novel.

However extreme has been the modern novel in stressing the commonplace, it has developed a form suitable for the expression of reality. Any reality, commonplace or not. This form is direct, unreflective, highly selective. It is in immediate contact with its material. It is uncompromising, tactless, unashamed. And its style is as bare and clear as a plain.

It may be that the whole flair for the commonplace will be found to have contributed chiefly to the formation of a new purity of form. The treatment of the commonplace calls for stark precision and the novel has learned something of stark precision through treating the commonplace. If the novel had continued to treat of "the good, the true and the beautiful" it might be, with the redundance of that phrase itself, laboring on in a fringed and silken fashion, tasseled, plumed, melancholy.

When the novel can take that form—that naked and lovely instrument—and that stark style, and cause them to function in the expression of nameless beauty, such as Hudson summons, it will have sounded the new note, the note of the novel of tomorrow. And this will be a note of

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romanticism, but not of romanticism as we have ever known it.

Ten years ago a wise man said: Free verse is all well enough. It is now a vehicle for many who otherwise would have no vehicle. But wait until the poets begin to use it. *Then!*

So it is of the terse, the staccato, the compact, the shorn form and style of the modern American novel. Heighten its compactness, take from it certain affectations such as deliberate sordidness, saturate it with all that divination can capture of communicable beauty. *"Then!"*

To use his divination to clarify the interpenetrating beauty of common life and to draw down still other beauty; not to manufacture it from unreality but to discern it in Reality and to reflect it; and then to pour this beauty through the clear crystal of a form as honest as a milk bottle—there lies the novelist's lovely, his imperative task.

But this he will never do if he is working with his mind alone. Only when he knows that his divination of beauty, of all life is "an independent growth which he himself tends and watches" will he incarnate in the novel the vast and lovely proportion of the days.

ZONA GALE.

The Profession of Novelist

IN view of the many generalizations now circulating about literature in the United States, it might be interesting, or even instructive, to examine the specific case of a relatively young man with a published novel of authentic value. It is necessary, for this purpose, to limit the investigation to a beginning writer, in fact, to a first novel. Its purpose will be to discover exactly the conditions which, here, await a fresh and actual literature.

It is, almost invariably, characteristic of a novelist of value that he should not, initially, be situated in a material ease. Young men with money, and post graduate honors, do not commonly turn to the novel, but to criticism and poetry. Young men who make their bow in the better known magazines hardly ever write novels—worth a thought—at all. Those who do, surprisingly, write good books produce them in hours taken from widely other necessary tasks; or in times of sickness and forced idleness. Such an individual, pouring into his pages everything, elsewhere suppressed, that he integrally is, finally has a manuscript put together and typewritten with an infinite pains and an immeasurable difficulty; it is posted or carried to a publisher; and, after a space of something like six weeks, he has a—for him—stupendous letter of acceptance.

This novel, which we are understanding as thoroughly worth doing, will, of course, be different from the flood of readily marketable fictions; it will probably be tragic, or, at the least, satirical, in spirit; and there is a chance that the manner of its writing will, too, have aspects of originality. The result of all this will be that the publisher, almost tearful over his unselfish nobility, will call the writer's attention to the fact that his book, while it may accomplish a critical success, can have little or no sale.

The inevitable deduction will be reflected in the rate of the royalty: the most honest payment possible will be five percent on the first two thousand copies, with two and a half percent more after that, and, perhaps, a future increase to ten percent. This novel, submitted toward the end of September—novels are apt to be written through the open months—will be accepted about November first. By that time the publisher's spring list must be pretty well in hand—with the present manufacturing conditions a number of the spring books will be already, mechanically, under way—and the novel we are considering set for publication next fall.

It will, then, appear a year after it was submitted; and, in the general mode of the publishing business, a royalty report will be returned three months later. The report will be forwarded in three months, and the half yearly payment made in six. This novel, then, let us say, was actually begun late in the winter of nineteen hundred and nineteen and, finished, it was submitted—this is very rapid—in the fall of that year. It was published in the autumn of nineteen twenty, and the first sum of money obtained from it sometime in the April or May of nineteen hundred and twenty-one, or two years after the putting of a pen to paper.

This novel, if it is individual and vigorously fine—unless it happens to be carried on the wave of a chance popular cause—must be, as a material property, a failure. If, for instance, two thousand copies are sold, the publisher will about get his money back; and, if its retail price is two dollars, after two years the writer will receive two hundred dollars. If four thousand are sold, the publisher, thinking himself well out of it, will make a little, and the writer will have the sum of five hundred dollars.

During that period, you see, while he may, perhaps, write two other novels, he can have none published. A second will, if he is fortunate, be in preparation for appearance not sooner than six months after the first came out . . . that is the best he can hope for.

Meanwhile, he is at the necessary employment of finding a living for himself and, perhaps, two or three others. The temperament of a novelist, his dream of peace, leads him quickly to marriage. If he is able he will, first, support himself by contributions to magazines of generous payments. Superficially, that has an appearance of contributing to his main desire, the writing of novels; but, in reality, it is not only tragically far from that but actually destructive to his ability as a novelist. It would be closer to his occupation if he labored in the pit of a steel mill; for there, at least, he would come in contact with the material of his aim.

He might be, again, he often is, employed in writing for newspapers, on special or general assignments, or even in a moderate editorial capacity. But that, while it is a better preparation for the novel than that offered by the public taste in short stories, breaks his power of concentration upon the longer ventures. There is hardly a novelist with a training in newspaper offices whose style is not sharp and brittle; it is, through habit, focussed on incidentals rather than on the whole. And of the other multitudinous occupations by the means of which beginning novelists manage to keep themselves alive nothing in detail need be said.

My own experience, attended by some unusually fortunate circumstances, in the main followed this course. The Lay Anthony—to refer to it only in the terms of its reviews—was, as a first book, quite generously noticed. I was to get a five percent royalty after a preliminary thousand copies were sold—then, in, I think, nineteen hundred and fourteen, a sale of a thousand would repay the publisher—and . . . some nine hundred were bought. I do not remember the terms of the contract for Mountain Blood, brought out a year afterward; but I recall very sharply that it did not pay me a penny then. I sold three

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papers of a type I liked to a magazine the reverse of popular, and got from them, in a diminishing scale, fifteen, twelve and a half and ten dollars.

That brought me well into nineteen sixteen, but—where my novels were concerned—nowhere near a material solvency. The fortunate circumstances alluded to, in connection with myself, were a comfortable place to live, an unconquerable laxness in whatever I failed to like or only half liked, and George Horace Lorimer. But all that, necessary as an explanatory note to my comments, is a digression.

The point is that, in the United States, the western world, of the present, the profession of a novelist simply does not exist. The novel, different from the lyrical measures of poetry or the compactness of essays and critical papers, requires a long time for its composition; it needs close thought and reasoning, yes, and peace, quiet; and such conditions, today, are expensive. The good young novel is the product of passion and resentment and a bitterness at injustice—qualities missed by the rich—or it is made of a dream of loveliness desirable in its shining remoteness from the immediate scene.

Things like those, beautiful and far away, or close and tragic, people, the public, do not like and will not pay for. The spectacle of suffering, so purifying to the individual, the mass neither will nor can support. And—but perhaps it is only my conviction—fine novels can be constructed from one of two sources, either they present the heroic or cowardly individual opposed to hopeless odds and death; or they have to do with that which was beautiful and is lost. There is, I feel, nothing else worth an inattentive curse.

The novel, itself a modern affair, is a necessary victim of modern circumstances: men no longer have any leisure, any quiet, any interruption of the waste of their beings. Individuals, individual minds, are disappearing in the confusion following the humanitarian welter of the nineteenth century. Any art is, in essence, aristocratic, proud, free from the cheapness of the mob; and now the mob, like a turbid and dead sea, is over all the land.

There is, in the scheme of the present, no need, no general need, for truthful or delicate novels. Those that are, hopefully, produced, have a short or a long life in a very limited sphere. A number of fine novels, when the truth or a delicacy of vision is never for a sentence departed from, will, after a succession of books and years, undoubtedly afford a dignified, but hardly plentiful, living. With them, as well, a reputation for integrity, for honesty and courage, will grow and fix itself in men's minds; and that is a great and a happy accomplishment.

That, however, lies in the distant future; the present is devastating; and there isn't, in the United States, even the small pension that fell to Mr. Conrad. What, specially, makes this condition sad is the fact that its grimness is accompanied by the most heartening proclamations and pretensions. The whole American world, it is made to appear, is waiting impatiently with laurels and gold for distinguished native creative writers. It is a situation that would be resembled by accompanying a dark secretive play with the loud music of a Follies Review.

A vast clamor of hypocrisy, of self laudation, has always resounded about the arts of music and literature; the titles of admirable novels are, seemingly, on all sentient lips; the titles are, yes, and even rude ideas of the plans of writing; a few actual volumes are prominent upon library tables . . . but that is as far as it goes. The novels themselves, like the defrauded relatives of prosperous and comfortable families, are not wanted around. It isn't pleasant for the smugly-minded, where they are sensitive at all, to be in the company of Sherwood Anderson. There is, really, no reason why they should have him unsettling their luxurious somnolence; in such a case I shouldn't put up with him for a second. I'd dismiss The Triumph of the Egg with a vague satisfactory remark about the need to suppress these propertyless agitators. Ship 'em to Rooshia, I would advise. Or else I'd make it clear that no such books could have a place in my family.

That is unanswerable, it Is, and no argument or effort can overthrow it. However I might wish for a better world—and, luckily, it is not on my sheet to struggle for improvements—with the earth as it is I cannot conscientiously blame its attitude toward men who are, in essence, its bitterest critics. To put down "love those that revile you" is nothing more than a vain display of ink.

Literature, as an art, as a service of beauty, has little or no place in the modern state of society; and it is just possible that it will never be of importance again. Maybe, forever, it is all over, only a lingering and cherished memory of something fantastic in the hearts of a dwindling few. There is—to my mind, pessimistic in cast—no evidence of even an infinitely delayed improvement in humanity; it is no more than the alternate fading and glow of a charcoal fire, a core of heat, blown on intermittently by a bellows. When the leathers of the bellows wear out, when the gases of the charcoal are exhausted, there will be a minute fleck, a dead drifting atom, of ash.

Yet, against all calamity—and I have said this so often that I must seem to be falling into the repetitious habit of old age—only beauty, woven in fragile materials or in hard metal and stone, is more durable than time. A fragmentary poem will be deathless, an arrangement of the spirit in prose will last, as our time runs, forever; but that will keep no body, and very little hope, warm.

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER.

The New Novel

WHAT is the new novel to be? In retrospect from another generation this phenomenon may not seem, after all, so different from its forerunners as contemporary self-consciousness would like us to believe. Time has a levelling way with all human accomplishments, even those done in the pure ether of art, and the surviving landmarks often seem to have little relation with the intervening valleys, however noisily these were once inhabited. The increasing preoccupation with the novel in our days and its voluminous and multifarious production may be due less to a renewed or undiscovered vitality in the form itself than to a growing realization of its adaptability to the needs of a crowded and self-conscious civilization. For it is beyond dispute that the novel has taken its place with the cinema and the newspaper in the vast cultural and interpretative effort of our world. That it is discovering within its flexible form new possibilities for the exploitation of new fields promises little for its present or future performance. It is the easiest and simplest weapon of self-revelation for a democratic society (however difficult and toilsome the complete mastery of its art is) and in its deepest essence must remain always autobiographical, and hence universally alluring . . . .

During the late century the novel oscillated outwardly

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between the rival camps of Realism and Romance. The long, inconclusive battle of the critics which somewhat languidly animated the intellectual life of the late nineteenth century was largely concerned with the defence and the attack of these two metaphysical unrealities, and it was not until the century mark was safely rounded that we began to realize that the prolonged battle about realism and romance, like all vehement conflicts, had been waged in a fog of misunderstanding for an impractical victory. Neither side of the controversy had an exclusive possession of the truth, for neither ideal existed except in the partisan imagination of the theorist, and the sturdier practitioners of the art dodged back and forth between the embattled camps,—as they always have done and always will do. For realism and romance represent, verbally, nothing more than two persistent moods of humanity, under which it surveys itself and the universe intermittently, not mutually exclusive, and together not completely occupying the ample territory of the human spirit. Consistent realism can be found only in the work of inferior and unimaginative artists, because they are more easily satisfied with surfaces, and a world of surfaces is the nearest approach to the absolute in a subjective universe. Conversely it may be said that consistent romance easily becomes nonsense, and human beings striving on the whole for the use of their intelligence quickly surfeit with undiluted romance. That is what happened exactly at the end of the last century when, in this country especially, a new and uneducated reading public avid for simple imaginative excitement boosted the sales of flimsy romantic novels to unheard of figures, then overnight rejected its passion.

With the snuffing out of this unsubstantial romance, the way was cleared for better things (not that the cream-puff "line" of romance has wholly disappeared or ever will lack favor in a world so largely composed of naïve people, but the flavors have been changed, and the more earnest craftsmen no longer supply the market for this kind of goods). The younger and more serious minded writers having given over the concoction of saccharine toys for the popular taste, ignoring the tiresome debates of the critics, went out for fresh adventure, and here it was that for nearly a generation England led the way. There began a period of interesting experimentation, which pushed the novel into untried fields and carried it for good and all beyond that futile controversy of realism and romance. Novelists forgot their old preoccupations, as to what could and could not be done in fiction, what the public would and would not "stand for". They have found that the scope of the novel can be indefinitely stretched to include new matters and new methods, and that the reading public will take—that is some part of it will take—whatever gives promise of novelty or a fresh perception of the old. Even dullness! For the ancient truth that the dull and the commonplace belong properly to life and can even be endured in literature when intelligently presented has also been rediscovered. Under the exhilarating leadership of Mr. Wells the new English novel assumed much of the kaleidescopic variety of the newspaper and tried to teach the reader to think, at least to consider many hitherto unfamiliar subjects. It also acquired, at many hands, a new frankness about human sexuality, or perhaps merely lost a puritan reticence of expression on private matters which had been temporarily imposed upon it by public manners. Finally it began a search of the Freudean caves for fresh motives and new thrills. Incidentally it had acquired from the glib interpretation of those opulent years just before the war, many of the European tricks of craftsmanship that had heretofore been concealed from the Anglo-Saxon by the veil of a foreign language. In short the novelist's art had become, like morals, thoroughly eclectic and individual, choosing its methods and its materials where it found anything to its purpose, often whimsically. With this surprising wealth of plunder both in matter and form, it remains to be said in all honesty that this period had no great master of the prose epic,—no Tolstoy, no Zola, no Hardy—nor even a Meredith, and the master ironist of the period was a Frenchman and his effulgence was that of a splendid and lingering withdrawal.

Thus, then, to the period set for all things by the war. Since the war the novel, at least the more vivid interest in its possibilities, has come to this side of the Atlantic. For although experimentation still goes on in England, more especially among the younger women novelists, the triumph of arresting accomplishment seems for the moment quite departed. And in this country, though there is anything but a pause, one feels the anticipatory bustle of the approaching accouchement rather than the happy certainty of an actual delivery. Only the hard pressed newspaper critic and that indefatigable enthusiast who composes the eulogies on "jackets" any longer believe in THE American novel. Nevertheless we await with more than usual eagerness those American novels which will fully justify the present wide interest in the art of fiction. America is undoubtedly waiting to be "done"—adequately, and a considerable number of excellent experiments attest the fact that the writers are either already here or will shortly appear, who will do the big field descriptively, analytically, and synthetically with all the up-to-date technique (including Freud) and with something better than "promise". They will find, indeed, that much exploratory work has already been accomplished unobtrusively by their elders, though most may seem to demand redoing, as it should in every generation. And they will also find (which their elders did not) that the subject is in a serious mood, willing, nay anxious to be "done". The American public is now ready and able to take an objectively cool and interested attitude towards the reactions which it creates in the artist and his resultant picture. That will be immensely helpful to the worker, for in this delicate undertaking there must always be a close cooperation between the artist and the sitter. America is ready—or nearly ready—for a reappraisement and a restatement of herself. . . .

Although this seems to speak encouragingly for an interesting and valid accomplishment before the younger American novelists, freed and equipped as I have tried to suggest in the foregoing paragraphs by the progress of the art through the last generation, yet it by no means prophesies confidently the coming at once of great novels or great novelists. For these depend, I take it, upon certain elements which in our ordinary discussions we are only too apt to ignore. One is upon the spiritual depth of the soil to be worked. If Main Street is to date a fair report upon the intelligence and the emotional depth of these United States, by and large (which I believe it is), then even the greatest craftsman will have to wait for his full harvest. One does not make enduring brick from that straw! But in the tremulous gropings of our fast changing time he may not have to wait long. . . . As for the great novelist himself, it is well to remember that craftsmanship, method and manner and material too, are but the superficies of a great art. The inner, and the incalculable factor is the quality of the individual spirit—the soul (if I may be

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permitted to lapse into the vocabulary of my ancestors). Even with the novel I think we should be more interested in that, more concerned with that, than we are with the matter of the tools employed. We shall never be content with simply having our work "done," no matter how faithfully, nor how dexterously the artists wield their tools. What we are waiting for is a new world to be revealed to us out of the disguise of the familiar and the worn through the spirit of some one who sees deeper and farther and more understandingly than we do, into whose vision we can resign ourselves confidently, as the religious convert resigns himself upon the bosom of authority and there finds the desired relief and freedom. Frankly I do not see upon the horizon of my today any evidence of such a comprehending creator, fit to reveal the new secrets of this tumultuous scene, and to impose his own authoritative, indubitable sense of its life. (Now that the great Anatole, alas, is gathering the last threads of his long and finely woven skein!) When that larger personality arrives it will make little difference what his method may be or his material or where he starts, whether in Gopher Prairie or New York, because he will steadily and surely respin the whole of our universe from whatever accidental fragments he may happen upon, and will consistently people it out of the secret stores of his own life.

For we must not forget that men and women, however much at times they may seem to ignore or even repudiate the fact, are more interested in the inner truth buried somewhere within their souls, than with all the outer adjustments and mechanics of their lives—and the two are only incidentally related. ROBERT HERRICK.

A Note on the Novel

THE writing of a novel is always a collaboration—like the production of any other work of imaginative art. One of the collaborators is chiefly concerned with form; he takes the material offered him by his partner, chooses among it, arranges it, makes his pattern with it. The other collaborator is largely responsible for scope, but he affects form by the quality and abundance of the material he offers and by the strength of his desire to have it used. These two collaborators have had many names in the history of art. They are now fashionably known as the conscious mind and the subconscious. They have been much studied by the psychologists, of late; the terms of their collaboration, in life as in art, are becoming more or less known; and that knowledge is important in any consideration of the form and scope of the novel.

The conscious mind has been described as a sort of hand that has developed out of the subconscious in order the better to grasp and manipulate reality. As a hand, it is always busy trying to arrange in some sort of comprehensible picture the chaos and muddle of facts around us. It is always making patterns—patterns of cause and effect, patterns of natural law or moral law, patterns of beauty, patterns of sequence and theme and recognizable purpose. Into art, it puts design and symmetry and balance and symphony and all those other qualities that make the disorder of actuality less bewildering to look upon. It continually leaves outside of its pattern great numbers of facts which it cannot fit into its immediate arrangement—and uses these subsequently in other patterns. And, under the name of criticism, it studies its past patterns and deduces what it calls the laws of art from these performances and tries to make all future performances conform to those laws.

But the subconscious mind—the dream mind—seems to have little respect for reality and less for pattern. It furnishes its material to intelligence under impulses of its own. It is the primitive animal mind, emotional, instinctive and sympathetically intuitive. It merely dreams dreams, making for itself pictures that express instinctive desires, and apparently getting relief for instinctive tensions in mere hallucinations of relief. And the psychic origin and impulse behind these hallucinations is the need of the human ego to get its way against reality, to dominate reality in imagination when it cannot dominate in fact.

For these reasons, it seems to me that there can be no final form in any art and no set limit to its scope. The form of the novel will continue to change as intellect devises new patterns to include new dreams from the subconscious; and these dreams will alter and enlarge the scope of the novel as the human ego enlarges its experience of the reality which it is trying to dominate. The difference between the romantic novel and the realistic will be a difference in the manner of this domination—the realist attempting to subdue reality by understanding it and the romanticist to defeat reality by escaping from it. The humorous fictionist will seek to raise himself above reality by laughing at it. The crusading novelist will make war on reality and try to overcome it with reforms.

The most popular American novel in the past has been the romantic, because the great need of the American psyche has been to escape the pressure of reality. American humor has long supported us in a feeling of superiority to reality by helping us to laugh at it. Now the crusading novel is becoming popular in its appeal to us to change a reality which we have neither escaped nor laughed out of existence. It remains for us to produce an artist—and a public to support him—who shall seek to dominate reality by knowing it and understanding it and accepting it as it is. The future form and scope of the American novel will probably be in his hands.

HARVEY O'HIGGINS.

A Brace of Definitions and a Short Code

THERE is a wholesome catholicity about the definition of the novel in The Concise Oxford: "fictitious prose narrative of sufficient length to fill one or more volumes, portraying characters and actions representative of real life in continuous plot." The two components in this definition give it a width of angle inclusive of two easily distinguishable sorts of work. One of these relies upon the contrivance of its pattern for maintaining the reader's concern, the performers being more or less rigidly conventionalized types. The other appeals to this same concern through the authenticity of its characters and their experiences. In the currency of the day, it is the latter sort, the novel of character—the portrait rather than the decoration, which gets itself spoken of as "the novel" or "the serious novel."

I am aware that I have taken controversial ground in making a classification from the reader's point of view, for many of my younger colleagues will hardly admit that the reader exists, let alone postulate him as a relevant factor in the affair. In the light of the brilliant per-

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formances of some of these younger and newer novelists, one does well to think twice before taking issue with them upon an abstraction of this sort; but I have thought twice and more than twice, and to me the thing is fundamental.

It seems to me that no act of creation, whether parthenogenetic or otherwise, is real unless it gives a valid objectivity to the created thing; sets it up by itself, on its own feet, and leaves it to walk alone, live its own life, weather its own storms. An act which doesn't result in the projection and detachment of an objective entity of some sort isn't a creative act at all but a mere self-satisfying gesture. The only objective existence a novel can have is through its readers, and, therefore, it is from the point of view of its readers that it must be judged. It must be judged by itself, without reference to its creator; it must have articulation enough in its own bones to enable it to stand alone, and vitality enough between its own covers to keep it alive.

That's plain enough, I think, so far, but it leaves the novelist in a difficulty; confronts him, anyhow, with a demand for a rather fine distinction. Does this objective theory of the novel imply a contact between the novelist and his reader? I believe it does, but I hasten to qualify this admission by saying that the only reader whose approbation the novelist has any concern with is himself. But himself as reader not as author. He must write what he likes, but he must make what he writes intelligible to a stranger whose likes and feelings and associations are similar to his own.

Writing thus, for his alter ego, he gives himself, of course, dead away, and his courage in giving himself dead away is the measure of his seriousness. If he writes up to a superior reader or down to an inferior reader, he is equally a snob and the truth is not in him.

I'd like, with the wedge of another definition, to split once more the half log we have left. There are still two sorts of novel a man may write, determined not so much by the selection of his character material as by his attitude toward that material. He may select unfamiliar types and make their unfamiliarity the attractive thing about them. He relies, if he does this, upon what a city editor would call the news value of his characters. He accents their distinctive speech, etiquette, point of view. If he does it plausibly, he gives his readers a sense, not always illusory either, of being increased in worldly wisdom, of becoming cosmopolites. At least they are personally conducted tourists, and, if the conductor knows his business, they have a wonderful time. They go back-stage; they visit western ranches, middle-western small towns, Hollywood, the Latin Quarter, India; they learn the distinctive slang of the chorus girl, the cowboy, the hick, the British subaltern and his Mrs. Hauxbee.

It is possible, even in dealing with this unfamiliar material, to put the stress on the other foot, accenting and revealing not the surface strangeness of these aliens but their underlying common humanity. "Folks," Sinclair Lewis says very earnestly, "are folks. The hobo, the itinerant tailor and the hick, just as much as the college professor, the business man and the society woman." And conversely, of course—though I never have heard Mr. Lewis say this—the college professor, the business man and the society woman as much as the hobo, the tailor and the hick. So this question asks itself: why, if common humanity is a novelist's concern, should he go afield to look for it?

The critical fashion of the day proscribes the exceptional. Unless the novelist wishes to rest under the imputation of romanticizing, let him write about commonplace people, dull inarticulate earthbound people, and let him courageously make them as dull and inarticulate and earthbound as the majority of mankind admittedly are. Let their deeds be still-born and their conversation mere ungrammatical adumbrations of their unrecognized desires.

Is it heresy to ask whether this sort of thing is not tourist fiction just as the cowboy and chorus girl stuff is tourist fiction? Of course, nobody is a cowboy to himself, nor a chorus girl. Is anyone a dull earthbound clod? Is the brave young radical who writes about earthbound clods, emphasizing their dull inexpressiveness—is he, to himself, dull and inarticulate and earthbound? He is not. He is an exceptional person. He is so exceptional that dullness fascinates him. He is so expressive that inarticulateness has a news value for him.

My professional code boils down to about this:

The novelist should give his work form and structure enough to make it intelligible to others than himself. He should write at his own level, neither up nor down. He should not flinch from giving himself away. He should rate at higher value the experience which, in the natural course of things, comes his way than that experience which he has gone looking for. He should not overrate the importance of ideas. He should not despise his characters. He should try to make every word and act of his characters concretely true, and let universality alone, for nothing ever was universal that began by trying to be.

HENRY KITCHELL WEBSTER.

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ANY attempt to place the novel inside of definitions, setting its meets and bounds brings us up sharply against the insistent question asked of old and never answered "What is art?" And for himself, and his cosmos, one man's guess at the answer is as good as another's, probably rather better. For every man has his own scheme of creation. Every man is set down alone under the stars and on the more or less solid earth, to build out of his conscious experience the fabric of the dream in which he walks. If he sets down some account of his dream, some definition of his universe in terms of love or fear or hate or joy or any emotional medium in which his conviction comes to him about life, what he makes, for him is art. But it is of necessity not art for any one else. It may be an obscure picture on the sand, drawn with a shell or stick. It may be a Poem of Ecstacy or it may be a cathedral or a large fat Mrs. Rubens in oil, or a patient Madame X. leisurely waiting for the laundry wagon to bring her first aid in the matter of clothes! Whatever it may be, to some man the thing means a conviction about the meaning of life. To its creator, if to no other soul on earth, the thing created in joy or pain or fear or love or whatever rise of pulse beat, means art. Others, of course, need not accept it as art; being in ribald spirits they may laugh at it, or otherwise, being mean and supercilious they may try to suppress and censor the man's expression, which may seem to others ugly or indecent, or stupid or wicked beyond tears. But whether they censor it in laughter or in rage, they must not forget that for the man who made it the thing was art. He has a right to issue his challenge to the world and stand or fall by it.

So any man's novel has its rights. Its rights are limited. We don't have to read it, thank Heavens! We don't

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have to approve it, having read it. We have the royal privilege of declaring that the author is a fool; that no such world as he has tried to depict ever did or could or should exist; which being translated only means that the novelist does not see our world. But, as fellow travelers in a number of different universes, and varying stages of cosmic environment, we have no right as potential artists to deny him the right to print and peddle the poor thing that is his own.

Now, here we come to the doctrine of a democratic theory in criticism. And we must come to it when we admit a variety of different worlds surrounding the consciousness of human beings. Now, this democratic theory of criticism like all democratic theories and doctrines is based upon a principle of tolerance, of mutual respect, of neighborly kinship in the cosmos. And if we follow a democratic theory of criticism art must not develop a snobbery, in its lower levels, in, say, the level of criticism. To set up rigid standards, to make inexorable rules, to apply static tests, to accept or reject any man's account of the world in which he lives as false and foolish is dangerous. Also democratically it is unfair. A number of critics affect to giggle at the novels of Mr. Harold Bell Wright. Their fathers sniffed at Bertha M. Clay. To some of us Mr. Wright does seem to walk among chromos as one who lives in a vast forest of Sunday supplements. And there are those who feel that Mr. Theodore Dreiser's world is afflicted with misanthropy and worms. As between a world of "Simply to Thy Cross I Cling" done in gaudy colors and a world painted from the mud of a pig pen many an average man or woman shrinks from choice. It is not a question of art. There is no more art in Sister Carrie for instance than in Pollyanna. It is largely a question of the world in which the authors move, of the philosophy of life which inspires the writer. And Sister Carrie may well be as false as Pollyanna in its philosophy. Life is doubtless highly carrieful—to coin a word—for Mr. Dreiser, and for Mrs. Porter it is surely pollyaneous; but for a lot of us it is neither. We trek along on the middle plane out of the heights where Pollyanna walks in trailing clouds of glory, and above the depths where Sister Carrie sloshes in the mud and muck. Possibly these middle averages toddle about with Alice Adams.

So let us for the sake of illustration say that broadly there abide these three views of modern American life personified by these three estimable young women, Sister Carrie, Pollyanna and Alice Adams. They personify rather distinctive groups in our novel reading public. Possibly the groups represent stratifications in the matter of viewpoint of life found in our book buying public. Why has not each crowd the right to its own opinion, and why should the exponents of either group stick up their noses at the others? If it pleases the Freeman as the exponent of soured and pickled brains and hearts and genital intestines to purvey that kind of wares—say literary tripes and caviar—well and good. The soured soul market is a trifle slow; but it is steady and seems to be growing. Then why try to stimulate it by affecting that those who deal in spiritual marshmallows under the Wright or Porter brand are ignorant venders of adulterated goods? And why insist that those who make and sell common cooking food—say Roast Beef Medium, for example—are base vulgarians. There is no particular virtue either of craftsmanship, in the making, or in the salesmanship in the selling as between those who handle gamy tripe, or marshmallows, or baker's bread. And the snobbery of the tripe makers is as unjustifiable as the unction of King's Daughters at the marshmallow counter. And as for the disdain of the prune and potato peddler, the workers in the other two departments of spiritual refreshment, it is positively wicked; if the tripe department will permit the use even in rhetoric of a word implying the existence of right and wrong.

Why can we not have a democracy in our art, and let posterity hang on whatever rewards, prizes or premiums it may choose? The novel is only one form of that outward evanescent expression of our emotions which passes for art. Music, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, possibly the despised movies, the drama and home making all are reflecting the things that are passing in our hearts. And we have many hearts, and are making "many inventions." For the most part they are fleeting shadows, whether upon the silver screen or in bronze or stone and steel. They pass as we pass. Why quarrel over the forms into which we cast our heart's desire? Why waste our time setting up a fleeting aristocracy in our art? Why make broad our critical phylacteries, why enlarge the borders of our literary garment? Why the Dial?

We can cry ourselves black in the face to catch the ear of posterity; but posterity will make its own judgments about us. For that matter is it highly important that posterity shall know us? Other generations have passed without leaving a mark in the sand. Why should we care which mark identifies us, whether Harold Bell Wright's or Booth Tarkington's or Sherwood Anderson's? Neither tells all about us. Each tells much. And the degree of truth in each man's story would seem hardly worth wrangling about a hundred year hence. The differences between Winesburg, Ohio and The Shepherd of the Hills, or between either and The Bent Twig or A Hazard of New Fortunes may not be so important to the reader of the next century as it may seem to the reader today. And all the hundreds of thousands of copies of the Shepherd printed and sold would avail it less if possible in the next century than all the critical claque for Winesburg, Ohio. The two or three decades of immortality of the Hazard and the Twig will not help them in that great day of judgement.

It is all vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit, this price making for posterity, this attempt to say what is good and what bad with the miserable rules and standards which we are setting up today. The novel is for the day, as the newspaper or the skyscaper or the park monument is. It finds its market in spite of our rules of art. Each novel circulates upon its own level. Its public knows it instinctively. Those seeking marshmallow novels never buy tripe or caviar, nor prunes. And the closed shop among the clerks and artisans in the literary candy trade, in the fictional packing house, or in the grocery store of novel making, does not stimulate more or better produce, nor wider and more intelligent marketing. The Phariseeism of the workers in the craft merely makes the consumer smile. He buys what he wants, follows his philosophy, chases his mood, or scents the desirable fodder of the moment. The novel he buys tells him what he wishes to know; and something more. Good or bad it fills him with the spiritual pabulum that he needs. At the moment of his purchase he would reject the kinds found in other books. And gradually as he gets a bellyful, he goes upward and onward, or downward and outward in his tastes and desires, until if he keeps on reading for a lifetime he knows about all that

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I.

FROM time to time dialogues between enterprising reporters and authors visiting this country gladden the pages of the daily press. Among these I remember reading some years ago an opinion on novels which has always interested me.

The reporter mentioned to the visiting author a novel presenting a brilliant delineation of a newspaper-writer who becomes a drug-fiend.

"The book is greatly over-rated," the visiting author replied. "Why this newspaper-writer—the hero—is only a second-rate man! I should not care to ask him to my home to lunch."

Think of the "noted names of fiction" who could not survive this simple test. Consider the imaginary figures that you cannot picture as enjoying lunch with your relatives, and with whom your relatives could not enjoy lunching. "I should not care to ask him (her) to my home to lunch." Goneril—or Regan either—Bill Sikes, Gilbert Osmond, Medea, Werther, Bradley Headstone, any of the people in Wuthering Heights—

Without indulging myself further in regarding this or other aspects of this quick test of the value of fiction I will hasten to say that the chief reason why it seems so dismal an absurdity is perhaps because it could only serve to cut off the visiting author from the most profoundly entertaining experience fiction offers. This is, for me at least, the experience of "dreaming true," the experience of being someone else, of being a hundred, a thousand other people.

II.

This interest in becoming somebody else has never seemed to me to arise from seeking novels as an "escape" from real life or from one's own life. One enjoys the power of identification with the million-peopled cosmos of novels not for the negative reason of seeking an escape but because the exercise of this power is a positive pleasure in itself, comparable to the pleasure of looking at well-composed colors, or of hearing sound beautifully ordered.

If one cannot ask everyone to lunch, if one cannot meet, converse with, live with, identify oneself with every kind of human life in the pages of a novel, then there is no place in the world where one can ask everyone to lunch, meet everyone, converse with, live with, identify oneself with every form of human life.

This is in my belief the chief distinctive contribution that the art of the novel makes to the life of the mind. In the other arts of letters the reader is more or less a listener, and part of the audience. In the art of the novel he is a participant.

Yet, besides this there are of course many elements of existence—too many to mention—which are the peculiar province of the novel; many kinds of truth that no other form of letters is so well fitted to express.

A way of life over a long space of time; the change of community opinion; the contrast of social groups; the several aspects of one man's or woman's nature; a correction of vision and gradual revelation; the development of human resources; above all the free and fecund power of life, its variety, its improvisational force in virtue of which one situation grows out of another in many-colored, creative continuance—these are some of the many truths that the novel tells best.

After he has been left by his thin-hearted wife, Lavretzky in Turgenev's Liza returns to live on and manage his father's estate:

> There under the window climbs the large-leaved burdock from the thick grass. . . . Farther away in the fields shines the rye, and the oats are already in ear, and every leaf or tree, every blade of grass on its stalk stretches itself out to its fullest extent. 'On a woman's love my best years have been wasted,' Lavretzky proceeded to think. 'Well, then, let the dullness here sober me and calm me down; let it educate me into being able to work like others without hurrying.' And he again betook himself to listening to the silence without expecting anything, and yet, at the same time, as if expecting something. The stillness embraced him on all sides; the sun went down quietly in a calm, blue sky. . . . In other parts of the world at that very moment life was seething noisily bestirring itself. Here the same life flowed silently along, like water over meadow-grass. It was late in the evening before Lavretzky could tear himself away from the contemplation of this life so quietly welling forth—so tranquilly flowing past. Sorrow for the past melted in his mind as the snow melts in spring; but strange to say, never had the love of home exercised so strong or so profound an influence upon him.

This has for me the singular magic of the novel's faculty for quietly welling forth, the profound charm of a work in which each part of the tale develops and enhances what has gone before, and is the moving prelude of what is to come.

Many instances occur to one of the genius of novelists in employing the unique opportunity the form affords for spacious original design. One thinks of the magnificent river-journey at the close of Tono-Bungay where one rides and rides past the high-piled tokens of changing civilization out and out to the open sea from which one looks back with emotion at the lives of George and of Edward Ponderevo as seen from afar now, through a veil of reflection on the greater ways of mortal dream and destiny.

One thinks of the tremendous scene of the wild populace at the guillotining at Auxerre in The Old Wives Tale, as contrasted with the staid persons and streets of the Five Towns whence Sophia Baines has come to stand at her hotel-window and look forth in disgust and fascination.

One thinks of the wide, bright tide of world-letters and word-criticism bearing Wilhelm Meister through his Lehr- und Wanderjahre; and of Daudet's Sappho with the painter Corot touched in among the guests at that brilliant ball in one of the opening chapters. Vista, panorama, multitude, spontaneous succession—all these the novel tells us supremely.

III.

The changing world of novels is full of surprises. One will have thought that, in general, literary fashions are rather unrewarding and tend to cheap standardizations of material. Then suddenly a literary fashion will be

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productive of admirable results. Or perhaps it would be more precise to say that often some new theme chances to be excellently expressed at about the same time by many novelists.

Thus the past season has been especially rich in the criticism of husbands and fathers. Inspired exposures have occurred on all sides—the exposure of Herbert Dwight Deacon, the exposure of Mr. Weemys in Vera and the exposure of Mr. Waddington. Among these Herbert Dwight Deacon is the most liberally treated by the author. This is to the good, as liberality is seriously needed by the male characters of fiction where they are too often disfranchised and appear purely in a vicarious relation as sons, fathers, husbands or lovers.

This vicarious discriminatory manner of regarding men in fiction is especially noticeable in the character of Tito Melema. Seen solely from the standpoint of his exceedingly feeble abilities as a lover, Tito, though physical beauty is almost too richly lavished upon him by his creator, has never the slightest chance as a human being. Always in a miserable subordinate state as a mere adjunct of Romola he is never for an instant permitted to come forward except on the depressing grounds of love and beauty and as a sort of male houri. His position is far more discouraging than that of Nora in A Doll's House. And one need only compare Ninian Deacon's treatment as a bigamist by his creator to Tito's treatment as a bigamist by his creator to appreciate the increase of enfranchisement for males in fiction.

Perhaps it is because of the recent overshadowing appreciation of Miss Lulu Bett that one has not heard much of an extremely beautiful and original novel of Miss Zona Gale's entitled Birth.

It is the story of a "superfluous man" in a Wisconsin town, the story of a whole town of men and women, a place most individually perceived. Yet its outline has some of the national angles of the town that imprisoned Thoreau, and where Stephen Crane saw the tragedy of The Monster. Years flow by and the changes of years. Death is here and love and pain, all touched with swift ironic humor. Each soul is imagined by this humor, and in the wisdom of truth intimate and profound. The neighbors walk past in the evening—the wise, the silly, the generous, the small. The band plays. The trains thunder overland. And you walk in sun and rain where

> Burage numbers her trees by thousands. In the morning the sun comes in strong gold, lavished upon the grass, save where the leaves lay their bright veils. All the narrow green strips outside the walks turn bright.
>
> In rain the town, like any other, lying folded in a visible medium, becomes an enclosure cut off from something. Rooms become more intimate. Something ceases, and something is present instead.

You too walk under the thousand-numbered trees over the November pavements. The possibilities of your fast-flying life hurry past you unrealized; and at their passage you despair and laugh at yourself and hope again. Your heart burns at the mean injustice of existence, its petty cruelty and hardness to those who are forgotten upon earth. Sometimes I have thought every splendid novel is about justice and injustice. This novel has the presence of genius. When you read it something ceases; and something is present instead.

It has the power of social imagination, the light which beyond any other illumines the art of the novel; and makes us hope ever to dream more truly of all the mortal fortunes in our world. EDITH FRANKLIN WYATT.

"The people whom I meet still talk and behave much after the old ways; but the novels they read appear to tell another story. The new biology, the new psychology, and the new sociology, which, as misunderstood and popularized by fiction, reduce the human being to a little unstable sex-protoplasm, have doubtless altered the views of the new generation on life and society and on what constitutes fitting speech. The frankness of the old novel has become as nothing. . . . By the side of Mr. Hergesheimer's last novel, Tom Jones reads like a Sunday-school book."—*Wilbur Cross in the April Yale Review.*

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to the supplement, with some of their chief novels

SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS. Born, Dunkirk, New York, 1871
Little Miss Grouch (*Houghton-Mifflin*), 1915
Wanted: A Husband (*Houghton-Mifflin*), 1920

MARY AUSTIN. Born, Carlinville, Illinois, 1868
Lost Borders (*Harper's*), 1909
26 Jayne St. (*Houghton-Mifflin*), 1920

JAMES BRANCH CABELL. Born, Richmond, Virginia, 1879
Domnei (*McBride*), 1920
Jurgen (*McBride*), 1919
Figures of Earth (*McBride*), 1921

WILLA S. CATHER. Born, Winchester, Virginia, 1876
O Pioneers (*Houghton-Mifflin*), 1913
My Antonia (*Houghton-Mifflin*), 1918

FLOYD DELL. Born, Barry, Illinois, 1888
Moon Calf (*Knopf*), 1920
Briary Bush (*Knopf*), 1921

THEODORE DREISER. Born, Terre Haute, Indiana, 1871
Sister Carrie (*Harper's*), 1907
Jennie Gerhardt (*Harper's*), 1911
The Genius (*John Lane*), 1915

WALDO FRANK. Born, New Jersey, 1889
The Dark Mother (*Boni & Liveright*), 1920
Rahab (*Boni & Liveright*), 1922

ZONA GALE. Born, Portage, Wisconsin, 1874
Friendship Village (*Macmillan*), 1908
Miss Lulu Bett (*Appleton*), 1920

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER. Born, Philadelphia, 1880
Three Black Pennys (*Knopf*), 1917
Java Head (*Knopf*), 1918
Linda Condon (*Knopf*), 1920

ROBERT HERRICK. Born, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1868
The Common Lot (*Macmillan*), 1904
The Master of the Inn (*Scribner*), 1908
Together (*Macmillan*), 1909

HARVEY O'HIGGINS. Born, London, Ontario, 1876
Adventures of Detective Barney (*Century*), 1915

HENRY KITCHELL WEBSTER. Born, Evanston, Illinois, 1875
An American Family (*Bobbs-Merrill*), 1918
Mary Wollaston (*Bobbs-Merrill*), 1920

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE. Born, Emporia, Kansas, 1868
The Real Issue and Other Stories, 1896
A Certain Rich Man (*Macmillan*), 1909
In the Heart of a Fool (*Macmillan*), 1918

EDITH FRANKLIN WYATT. Born, Tomah, Wisconsin, 1873
Great Companions (*Appleton*), 1917

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